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OR

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By the

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VOLUME III

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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,
Archbishop of New York.

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Pentecost

CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES

DISCOURSE I

The Historical Fact of Pentecost—Rationalism

WHEN the days of Pentecost were accomplished they were all (the apostles and disciples and also Mary) together in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were of fire, and it sat on every one of them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak.—*Acts* ii. 1–4.

ON THAT day there were gathered in Jerusalem devout men of every nation under heaven, who when they heard this noise came together and were amazed because every man heard the apostles speaking in his own tongue, and in their surprise they said one to another: "Are not all that speak Galileans? And how have we heard every man our own tongue wherein we were born?

Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt and the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews also and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians: we have heard them speak in our own tongue the wonderful works of God."[1]

Such is the miracle of Pentecost as narrated by St. Luke, the miracle which the Church commemorates and celebrates this day, a miracle which because of its nature, its importance, its historical certitude, and the consequences that followed from it, is beyond comparison among the greatest recorded in Holy Writ, and ranks next after that of the resurrection of Christ. It marks the end of the Mosaic Law and the beginning of the Law of the Gospel, the death of the Synagogue and the birth of the Church; on this day the apostles succeeded to the prophets and the kingdom of Christ was established on earth.

In this first Discourse on Pentecost I shall explain the fact itself or the miracle, following the sacred text; then I shall examine the explanation given of it by modern rationalists, whose aim is wholly to destroy its supernatural character, and when I have done so I shall leave you to say what judgment is to be passed upon the endeavors of those men, who constantly appeal to reason and

[1] Acts ii. 7–11.

end by casting it aside altogether. In their efforts to make reason an enemy to faith and faith a rebel against reason, they make doubt the rule of reason and thus prepare the way for its self-destruction. Instead of building up they pull down; and when they have made a desolate waste all around them and created a desert, they say to reason: "Now you are free to reign."

Among the Hebrews there were three great feasts; the Pasch, which was celebrated on the full moon of March and commemorated their liberation from Egyptian servitude and the miraculous passage across the Red Sea; Pentecost, which fell on the fiftieth day after the Pasch and commemorated the promulgation of the Law on Sinai;[1] the *Scenopegia* or feast of *Tents* or *Tabernacles,* which commemorated their nomad life in the desert. On each of these three feasts every Hebrew was expected to visit in person the Temple of Jerusalem, the one Temple of the Jewish people. This weighty obligation served wonderfully to preserve and stimulate the unity of the religious and national spirit among the Jews, a unity which has nothing comparable to it in the history of all peoples.

God so disposed events that the Law of Love, which was to take the place of the Law of Fear

[1] On the Hebrew Pentecost the Law prescribed that the first fruits of the earth were to be offered to God.

given to Moses, should be promulgated on the great feast of the Jewish Pentecost, either because the Jewish was a figure of the Christian Pentecost, or because the immense concourse of people which the feast had drawn to Jerusalem gave the apostles a favorable opportunity to preach the Gospel and establish the Church.

When, therefore, the days of Pentecost were accomplished all the apostles and the faithful were in one place, or in the Cenacle, where they had been assembled for ten days praying and meditating.[1]

Christ had promised the Holy Spirit, who was to transform the apostles into other men and to fit them to go forth on the arduous mission for

[1] Among the Hebrews the Cenacle was a large hall or room in the upper part of the house where they were accustomed to assemble either to pray or to eat. Frequent mention is made of it in Holy Writ.

It should excite no surprise that the apostles and disciples spent a great part of the day together in prayer and meditation. The social conditions among the Hebrews were quite different from ours. Less time was given to manual labor among them than among us; every one had his own trade, and this never prevented him from being fairly well informed, or even highly educated. With us the material needs are so numerous and exacting that one who lives by the labor of his hands is obliged to give ten or twelve hours to work; only the well-to-do can look to the affairs of the soul, and the acquisition of knowledge is both rare and costly. In the social conditions as they existed at that time, and as they exist to a certain extent in the Orient to-day, in that climate where nature is so prodigal to man and exacts so little from him, the life of the laborer is such that it leaves him many hours for rest. Instruction being in a sense common to all, each was fairly well informed of passing events (Renan, The Apostle, c. iv).

which He had destined them; but neither the promise nor the gift superseded the necessity of the preparation which the apostles were to make in advance and which they did make by coming together for prayer and meditation in the Cenacle and in the Temple.[1]

Some preparation is always required on the part of man for the reception of the gifts of God; were it not so, laziness and sloth would be encouraged and countenanced and there would be no stimulus to human activity to gain the merit of which it is capable. Very frequently in the work of our own sanctification we are inclined practically to expect and to require that God shall do it all; if we fail we lay the fault on God, and if we succeed we ascribe the merit to ourselves alone. This is a two-fold fault; first, we are listless and lazy, and next, we are proud and presumptuous. Let the example of the apostles be a warning to us to avoid both dangers.

"And suddenly there was a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting." Before nine o'clock on the morning of the day of Pentecost suddenly a great noise was heard from on high, as of a rushing wind, and it resounded everywhere and filled the room where they were gathered together. It was not wind nor a tornado that blew

[1] Luke xxiv. 53.

about the house, but the effect was similar to that which a violent wind produces; and it is clear that its coming could not be naturally explained, since it came on with great suddenness and was of extreme violence. It was neither a wind nor a tornado.

My friends, God is a most pure spirit and can not be apprehended by the senses, nor can they take note of His action; we apprehend Him with the mind alone, and we are conscious of His action in our soul. But in order that our mind and spirit may be stirred to apprehend the presence of God and His action upon us, that the intellect may be enlightened and the will moved and transformed, it is fitting that an external, a visible action shall accompany the internal and invisible action, that thus the entire man may rise up to God. And this is why in Sacred Scripture the presence of God and His action upon man is always accompanied by some extraordinary material manifestation. Now it is a cloud on high; again it is a flame, or a dove, or a light passing breeze; again it is a voice as of thunder, a noise or a sound as of a mighty wind; or it is a ball of fire or a stream of light, as in the miracle commemorated to-day and of which Holy Writ leaves us the record.

The sudden and crashing noise that filled and shook the house must have been heard throughout

the whole city, since we read that a great multitude ran thither to learn what had happened. It may be that God by that extraordinary and sudden sound wished to convey an idea of the great movement and the profound moral and intellectual transformation which the nascent Church was to inaugurate and effect in the world. At the very moment when the air within the house and outside vibrated with the roar of sound there appeared above the apostles, gathered together in prayer, parted tongues as of fire, and they rested upon each of them. It would seem that at that instant they saw a globe of fire, a great stream of light, and that this divided into small fillets or points, resembling tongues, one of which rested upon each of those assembled there.[1]

All divine manifestations have this peculiarity, that by a certain affinity which exists between their visible phenomena and their invisible operations they show forth in themselves the nature of the effects they produce on minds.[2] The fire,

[1] It may be inferred that these tongues of fire came down upon not only each of the apostles, but also upon the hundred and twenty assembled there.

[2] The catechism teaches that the sacrament is a visible sign of invisible grace, which is equivalent to saying that a sacrament, that is, the matter or rite joined to the words pronounced by the minister, adumbrate and signify externally what takes place internally. Water washes the body, grace washes the soul; bread and wine nourish the body, the Eucharist nourishes the soul, etc. Something similar takes place in the miraculous manifestations of God, as in that of Pentecost. The fire and the tongues indicate the effect produced in the apostles, and hence Jesus Christ desig-

dividing into the form of tongues and resting on the apostles, was a symbol of the spiritual fire that filled and penetrated their souls, cleansed their hearts, illuminated their minds, and made their lips eloquent, and which through their toil was to spread over all the earth, lighting everywhere the flame of divine charity. The world, which has been converted and transformed by their labors and those of their successors, bears witness to the power of that divine fire, kindled on Pentecost day, and which issued forth from the Cenacle, never to be extinguished.

And here, my friends, allow me to make a digression which as times go, if not necessary, is at least useful, and will help to give you an insight into the character of rationalism, or what is the same thing, of modern unbelief.

It is characteristic of ancient as of modern rationalism to subject all things without appeal to the immediate judgment of the individual reason and to admit nothing except what the reason comprehends, and to reject or set aside what it can not comprehend. There is no authority, no matter what it may be, that can set itself above the reason and demand its assent. Now it is clear that all supernatural truths can not be compre-

nated the coming of the Holy Spirit by the name of Baptism, a Baptism of fire—"*He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. You shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*"

hended, and that there are many natural truths which can be either only partially comprehended, or concerning which there are many doubts and difficulties that can not be solved by the majority of intelligent men, to say nothing of the illiterate. What, then, is to be done? To be consistent reason must reject them all, or at least it must have doubts concerning them, and therefore rationalism must issue in unbelief or in a negation of all supernatural and even of most of the natural truths. And this is precisely what has taken place, and what is taking place under our very eyes. A rationalist, when he comes face to face with a supernatural truth, and one too imposed upon him by almighty God, simply says: I do not comprehend it and therefore I have a right to rid myself of it; I will not accept it; I reject it. But, it is urged, God has attested these truths by facts, luminous as light; He has attested them by *miracles.* Miracles, replies the rationalist, are impossible; they are the creations of ignorance of the laws of nature; of popular belief, always inclined to the extraordinary and marvelous; of superstition or of the craft of those who know how to make use of miracles for their own advantage. But these miracles, it is urged again, are certain; they can not be questioned; they challenge reason to deny them, if it can. Then the rationalist sets about subjecting them to the tests of criticism,

confident that he will be able to dispel them as the mist is dispelled by the rising sun. Such is the work of the rationalist, who, armed with his critical tests, assails and fancies he can demolish one by one the miracles of the Gospel, which are the seal of the truths it teaches. Such is the systematic work of a writer, a real type of the modern rationalist, who undertook to explain away by criticism and to demolish all the miracles of Christ and of His apostles.[1] Of course he could not help taking in hand the miracle of Pentecost, recorded in the Acts, and in his "Life of the Apostles," which he wrote after he had written that of Jesus Christ, he set himself to give an explanation of it, such as might be expected from such a writer.

His argument is this. The disciples of Jesus Christ were dominated by the idea that they should receive the Holy Spirit, of whom the Master had spoken to them so often. They were persuaded that every feeling of pure and holy joy

[1] This is Ernest Renan, who died in 1892. In the Life of Jesus and in The Apostles, he sets himself to this work of demolition with a calmness and self-possession to which I know nothing comparable. In the History of the People of Israel, written subsequently, he continues this same work of destruction and follows the same methods. Scarcely any rationalist has done as much harm to the Faith as this man, not indeed by the force of his reasoning, which is most superficial, but by his literary form, his fascinating and graceful style, his vivid and exuberant fancy, the liveliness of his figures and imagery; and more than all by a calm and impartial temper and a seeming modesty, thus skilfully masking his judgments and expressing the great respect which he affects for his readers and for all those who differ from him.

that they experienced, every feeling of consolation, every impulse of love and courage, of enthusiasm for what was true and good, came from the Holy Spirit, and that He would communicate Himself to them by a breathing and by some audible sound, and this particularly when they were all gathered together. With their minds full of this idea and of the promise of the Master, burning with love for Him, yearning anxiously for the coming of the Holy Spirit, in a state of moral nervousness and therefore predisposed to hallucination, they came together in the great hall of the Cenacle. All of a sudden a storm came up, the winds whistled, the windows rattled, the lightnings flashed in the heavens, the thunder roared, and possibly at that moment a globe of fire, a blinding flash of lightning, came into the room, darted here and there above them, lighted up their countenances, and they believed that the splendors of Sinai were renewed. They were sincerely persuaded that they had received the Baptism of fire, that they were filled with the Holy Spirit, that they should at once set out upon the mission concerning which the Master had so frequently discoursed to them, and they accordingly began to preach in His name.[1]

Such, my friends, is the explanation which the

[1] I think it well to reproduce here in its entirety the explanation of the fact or miracle of Pentecost given by Renan.

"The dominant idea in the Christian community at the time

rationalism of this age gives us by the mouth of its ablest exponent, of the miracle of Pentecost. In substance the stupendous fact may be reduced to a singular combination of two elements, the moral state of the apostles, who were perplexed and were confusedly looking forward to the

of which we write, when the apparitions had ceased, was the coming of the Holy Spirit. It was thought they would receive Him in the form of a mysterious breathing, passing over all those present; some fancied that this would be the breathing of Jesus Himself (*John* xx. 22). Every interior consolation, every feeling of courage, every impulse of enthusiasm, every sentiment of sweet and lively joyousness that they experienced, without knowing whence it came, was the work of the Holy Spirit. These men of tender consciences, as always happens, ascribed to an external cause the exquisite feelings that were born within them. These strange phenomena were produced especially at their meetings; when they were all gathered together and silently awaiting the breathing from on high, a whisper, a stir of any kind, was believed to be a descent of the Holy Spirit. In the early days the apparitions of Jesus took place in this way; now the current of ideas was changed; it was now a divine breathing that passed over the little church and filled it with heavenly effusions. . . . The hallucinations of touch were quite frequent among persons so nervous and so carried out of themselves; the slightest current of air, accompanied by a murmur in the midst of the deep silence, was believed to be the passing of the Spirit. One believed that he heard it, and presently all heard it, and the enthusiasm was communicated from one to the other. . . . On a certain day when the brethren were gathered together a storm came up. The windows were forced open by the impetuosity of the wind; the heavens were all aflame. In these regions storm clouds are always accompanied with a great diffusion of light, the whole atmosphere is luminous with flashes of flame. Whether it was that the electric fluid penetrated into the room itself or that a blinding flash suddenly lighted up the countenances of all, they were convinced that the Spirit had entered in and rested upon the head of each in the form of tongues of fire. . . . This Baptism took place only on rare occasions, and it is claimed that it was received only by the apostles and disciples in the Cenacle" (The Apostles, c. iv, pp. 63–67).

coming of the Holy Spirit; and to a storm which just then came up, during which there was an abundant discharge of electric fluid, which they mistook for the Holy Spirit Himself. Or still more briefly: the miracle of Pentecost is nothing more than a most odd trick of the imagination; the apostles fancied that they had received the Holy Spirit and that they had been transformed into other men; and therefore they were so in reality.

In listening to this explanation of the miracle of Pentecost given us by a contemporary rationalist, you may be inclined to believe that I have purposely exaggerated with the view of more easily refuting him. Do not believe it, my friends, for the rationalistic explanation of it that I have given you is the last that has been furnished us by modern criticism and may be read in the pages of the distinguished writer. If it goes to the extreme limit of the incredible and the ridiculous, am I to blame?

There was a dominant persuasion in the Christian community that the Holy Spirit would come; that He would be received in the way of a mysterious breathing; that every good interior impulse, every lively emotion of the soul, came from Him; and that His coming would take place most likely where they were gathered together, where every lightest movement of the air and every unusual

disturbance would cause them to believe that the Spirit of God had descended upon them. Such is the argument. These are all only assertions, which the author puts forth with apparent modesty, indeed, and hesitatingly; but in reality when taken as a whole they are proposed as the true and only possible explanation of the miracle. How does he prove them? What arguments does he advance to make them at least likely? I have sought for them and I have not found a single one. It is true that in that small community there was, if you will, a lively anticipation of the coming of the Holy Spirit. But how was He to come? When? What would be the visible and invisible effects of His coming? They did not know, nor could they know, and if they set about imagining what His coming would be like, the thoughts of each would differ from the thoughts of all the rest. How, then, could they in an instant all agree in believing and saying: "The Spirit of God is come upon us all"? Why did not the strange phenomenon of hallucination take place earlier or later, or on some more solemn occasion? Why should all those hundred and twenty persons gathered there believe, and all instantaneously, as if they had all received an electric shock, that they had been invested with the Holy Spirit? The characteristic of an hallucination or of a phantasy is that it is wholly subjective

and therefore its effects or its tricks, or whatever you wish to call them, are usually as diverse as are the aptitudes and tendencies of the various individuals; and hence what one sees or feels is not seen or felt by another, or not in the same way, degree, or measure. There is no trace of all this in the miracle we commemorate to-day.

Again it is said: It was a common belief that every interior movement of the spirit, every passionate enthusiasm, every impulse of courage, every ardent and refined sentiment of the heart, was to be attributed to the Holy Spirit, who was thought to be infused at the very moment that they were experienced. To affirm all this so confidently is going too far; it is to claim to read the mind, to measure and weigh its most intimate and hidden thoughts and sentiments, as one might do with gas, which the scientist develops from a body by the action of chemical agents. Certainly, the members of that community did believe, as we Catholics believe now, that whatever is good and holy comes from God; but between this belief, common to the faithful of every age, and the miracle that took place in the Cenacle there is a profound and immense difference. Who will dare deny it?

Will the rationalists, who wish to explain everything and who are in duty bound to do so, tell us how it comes that, in spite of the fact that

all Christians, from the days of Christ to our own, have been firmly persuaded that every good and holy sentiment comes from the Spirit of the Lord, yet the miracle of Pentecost with its effects, such as we know them to have been, has taken place only once there in the Cenacle, unexpectedly and in such way that no one had the shadow of a doubt about it? My friends, how often have certain pious, extremely sensitive souls, souls full of faith, who seek all things of God and refer all things to Him, been penetrated through and through with feelings the most intense, filled with a lively joy, moved by powerful impulses, and carried away by an ardent enthusiasm; but in the course of eighteen centuries has ever a phenomenon taken place so extraordinary, so fraught with consequences of the highest moment as was that which, we must admit, took place in the case of the apostles? How many gentle breezes have blown, how many mysterious noises have been heard, how many heavenly inspirations have been vouchsafed, since time began, both before Christ and since, on occasions more or less analogous, and in the case both of individuals and of entire communities, but did they ever dream that the Holy Spirit had descended upon them? And if so did they take up a work like that which the apostles undertook and successfully accom-

plished, the evidence of which we have before our own eyes at this day?

Note also that, if the apostles were men inclined to be credulous, living in an atmosphere of ardent faith, and yearning for the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were also timid, diffident of themselves, mistrustful of others, and disposed to doubt everything; their faith was far removed from that which moves mountains and to which all things are possible. They were so far from giving credence to the creations of the fancy and surrendering themselves to its wild flights, that, as you know, they obstinately refused for days to believe in the resurrection of the Master; they pronounced His apparition a phantom and they who attested it, they said, were under an hallucination. The apostles all belonged to the common people; they had grown up to manhood along the lake shore or in the fields; they had never given themselves to study; they had lived far from great centers where passions are strong and ardent; they were by habit, by the tenor of their private lives, by conscience and the experience of their own weakness, utterly free from the perilous dreams of greatness and missions that would evoke the plaudits of men. Let us recognize this fact, that if ever there were men alien by nature from cherishing golden dreams of marvelous ad-

venture, of direct communications with the Divinity; men incapable of a sublime enthusiasm, demanding continuous and proportionate sacrifices, these were the apostles. Their recent and terrible experience, if it had no other effect, had convincingly taught them that. To pretend, then, by such theories, by hypotheses destitute of all foundation and contrary to the very nature of things and to the character of the apostles, rationally to explain the great fact of Pentecost is to do violence to reason; it is like explaining the cyclone by the breathing of an infant, or the conquest of Alexander by the oracle of Delphi, or the empire of Rome over all the then known world by the cackling of the geese that prevented the taking of the Capitol. It is not true that great events are produced by insignificant causes; they may seem insignificant to the careless observer, but they are and they must be adequate, if we will not overturn the supreme and inexorable law which demands that causes be proportioned to their effects.

I have already told you how modern rationalism, which under the name of science pretends to explain everything, understands the miracle of Pentecost. Their solution is substantially this: There was no such thing as a coming of the Holy Spirit; simply a storm broke out on that ever

memorable morning; the wind blew furiously; the windows rattled violently; the sky all around was luminous with streams of light; a bolt of lightning entered into the room where they were; it illuminated the countenances of them all, and divided, taking the form of tongues of fire, mystic tongues, which reminded those poor Galileans of the office that had been committed to them, and possibly of that other miracle, yet to come, of the gift of strange tongues.

May Heaven guard you, ye men of science. Gladly would we become your disciples and follow you along the paths that are made luminous with your light, were it not that you teach us that every man is provided with reason and that his first and highest duty is to follow whither it leads, and that, therefore, you call yourselves scientific men and rationalists. Allow me, then, also to use this reason and to ask you a few questions, and to propose a few doubts that I should like to have cleared up. You say that before eight o'clock in the morning on Pentecost day a hurricane burst over Jerusalem, the lightning flashed, the windows of the Cenacle rattled, a bolt of fire entered into the room and scattered here and there in the form of bands or tongues of fire. This, you say, is the full explanation of the fact. But how do you know that on that day and at that hour a violent

storm broke out over the city of Jerusalem and over the Cenacle? Who told you so? Where are the documents to prove it? How can you demonstrate that it was a rushing storm-cloud? The narrative is given only in a single book, of which St. Luke is the author; you derived your information of the fact from that book; but it speaks neither of storm-clouds, nor of lightnings, nor of the dispersion of electric fluid; all this you read into the narrative and draw upon your imagination for it nineteen centuries after the event took place. Had the apostles never seen a storm in those lands where, as you correctly say, they are accompanied with a great diffusion of light? Had they never seen there a thunder-cloud and a bolt of lightning? Why should they so strangely confound that storm with the coming of the Holy Spirit, and not so many others which they had witnessed? You reply, because at that precise moment they were so mentally prepared and disposed that they could not help confounding and mistaking that storm and bolt of lightning for the descent of the Holy Spirit. How do you know this? Did you twenty centuries after the event enter into and search the mind and will of the apostles? Did they tell you so or did others, who lived in their time? Did you read it in some contemporaneous author, or in one who lived near their age? No; but you assert it because it seems

to you it ought to be so; it is an hypothesis of yours, which you ingeniously substitute for the fact, as narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and which you ask us to accept as historic truth.

The bursting of a storm-cloud, the explosion of a thunderbolt, and, still more, being enveloped in the tongues of flame that leap out from it, fills the stoutest heart with terror, and how much more the apostles, timid by nature and wholly ignorant of those fear-inspiring phenomena and of their laws? They should have felt that their end had come and have stood still, pale, trembling, and terrified, looking at one another in amazement; and instead of their tongues being loosed, they should have been speechless and helpless, unable to speak or move. But instead of remaining timid and fearful as they had been, they became bold and audacious; their tongues were loosed and made eloquent; they instantly went forth from the Cenacle into the highways and public squares, announcing the new doctrine, preaching the divinity of the Master to all, to His enemies and judges, to His accusers and murderers. And all this, my friends, is the effect of a storm!

Now there were gathered together in that upper room not alone the apostles and disciples, but a large number of women and with them the Mother of Jesus; in all about one hundred and twenty persons. Does it seem likely that all these would

have mistaken a storm for the descent of the Holy Spirit? That none of them would have had a doubt about it either then or afterward? That all would have believed that they were filled with the Spirit of God, and have spoken like men who were? This seems, to say the least, unlikely. If from being timid and ignorant, unskilled in speech, simple, and wholly inexperienced, we should believe that we could become fearless and learned, eloquent, sagacious, and experts in business, simply by persuading ourselves that we had received the Spirit of God, and should try the experiment, you can readily understand what would be the result; we should think ourselves wise when we are only fools; but the world would not follow us and it would mete out to us speedy and merited justice. How, then, could the apostles and all the disciples, solely by being persuaded, or rather, by being deluded into believing, that they were filled with the Holy Spirit, become really what they were not, namely, fearless and intrepid, learned and eloquent, circumspect and versed in all conditions of life, even the most complex and difficult? And can it be said that so strange and unheard-of a change, a change both instantaneous and lifelong, should have been wrought in above a hundred persons, by witnessing a violent hurricane and the bursting of a thunderbolt in their midst, which they in the

best of good faith mistook for the presence of the Holy Ghost? Was there ever such a phenomenon before, or do you think it possible that there will be ever such another in the ages to come?

Nor is this all. The effects of an unrestrained imagination, of an hallucination, no matter how overmastering, diminish with time and ordinarily disappear altogether in every one; how much more so in a large number of persons differing in age and sex, in culture and character? Good sense will return, if not to all, at least to some; the hallucination will pass away and its victims will return to themselves. In our case nothing of the kind happened. The apostles and disciples, all the hundred and twenty who were in the Cenacle, lived some shorter, some longer lives, some even to close upon a hundred years. Among those was there a single one, who returning to himself believed or suspected that what had taken place in the Cenacle was an hallucination, and who in consequence changed his manner of life? There is not the slightest evidence of it, in fact, all evidence is to the contrary.

The little community on Pentecost day after the storm was spent went out from the Cenacle and dispersed little by little throughout the whole Greek and Roman world and went even into distant and barbarous lands. The apostles and disciples went into Persia and Mesopotamia, and it

would seem as far as India; others founded churches in Asia Minor, in Greece, in Macedonia, in Egypt, and along the coasts of Africa; others again established themselves in Rome and in the various provinces of Italy, while still others carried the Gospel into Spain and Gaul, and even into Germany. They were nearly all separated from one another; their struggle against Paganism and Judaism was incessant, desperate, and ferocious; after enduring exile and prison, contumely and torture of every sort, they all mounted the scaffold, displaying always and everywhere a marvelous calmness and tranquillity, incomparable courage and fortitude of mind, a disinterestedness and an accumulation of virtues that filled even their judges and their most implacable enemies with amazement. By word and example and by their miracles they converted hundreds of thousands of Pagans to Christ. Compare these apostles and disciples who go up and down the world founding churches and finally dying for Jesus Christ, with those apostles and disciples who followed Him during His life on earth and who assembled in the Cenacle. How different were they after the day of Pentecost from what they had been before it! Ask them when they were changed into other men and they will reply with one voice: "On the day of Pentecost." Ask them how they were changed, and they will reply:

"The Holy Ghost on that day came down upon us and in an instant we felt ourselves wholly changed." Ask them if they do not deceive themselves, if it was not a delusion and they will answer: "No, no; it was not a delusion; the power of God transformed us." And now say, if you will, that this company of men, suddenly changed into heroes, martyrs, models of every virtue, who subdued Paganism and Judaism, who founded the kingdom of Christ that now covers all the earth, who transformed the whole of society, say now if you will that these men were deluded and under an hallucination. Say now if you will that the establishment of the Church, the grandest, the most stupendous creation that was ever seen on this earth, is due to the breaking out of a storm, to a clap of thunder and a flash of lightning; that some poor fishermen, brought together, no one knows how, in a room, were deluded into believing that the Holy Spirit came down upon them with His gifts! Was there ever such an hallucination as that? And is it to this unheard-of hallucination that we owe Christianity with all its marvels? Is it not more reasonable to suppose that the man, who dared to attempt to explain the miracle of Pentecost by such an hallucination, is himself hallucinated? But if you do not wish to say that he is hallucinated, allow us to class him among romancers and to inscribe on the book,

which he calls a scientific and critical work, this title, "A New Romance."

Victor Hugo, after describing the battle of Waterloo and referring to the stupendous consequences of that event, asks: "Why did the greatest of generals lose that battle? What was the cause of that event which decided the destinies of Europe?" He replies that a rain, a few drops of water that fell the day before, caused the plans of the great captain to miscarry. We smile on hearing this unexpected explanation and say, "Victor Hugo is a romancer," and this and similar lapses are condoned to romancers. And we say the same of our critic and philosopher who fancies he can explain the transformation of the apostles on the day of Pentecost and the conversion of the world by a tornado that swept over Jerusalem and by a flash of lightning that filled the Cenacle with sheets of flame. He is a romancer.

Returning to the Sacred Text we read that when the sound was heard at the place where the apostles were gathered together a great multitude ran thither, and were confounded in mind, because each of them heard the apostles speaking in his own tongue. From the narrative we gather that the apostles, immediately on receiving the Holy Ghost, began to speak to the assembled people

and the burden of their discourses was naturally the stupendous miracle that had then just taken place and the necessity of believing in Jesus Christ, whose ambassadors they were.

And now to the miracle of the coming down of the Holy Ghost a second miracle is added, the seal of the first, which fills with bewildering amazement the crowds that surged around the apostles. They listened to them with mingled curiosity and reverence; then they looked from one to another, and concluding from the difference of dress and accent and from other indications that they belonged to diverse and distant countries, and perceiving that all, each in his own tongue, understood the new preachers, who were speaking only one language, and that their own native tongue, they were stupefied and said one to the other: "Are not all these that speak Galileans? How, then, does each of us hear his own native tongue?" St. Luke, continuing the narrative, tells us that these strangers discussed the matter among themselves, not being able to account for the wonderful fact that each heard the familiar accents of his own tongue while these Galileans were speaking. "How is this?" they said. "We Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia; of Pontus and Asia, of Phrygia and Pamphilia, of Egypt and the

part of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we have all, each in his own tongue, heard them speak the wonderful works of God." There were men there of sixteen different nationalities who were amazed on perceiving that all understood the apostles equally well, and they questioned themselves, and asked others how it could possibly be.[1] The fact was certain; it was there before their eyes; there was no denying it; and as happens always when in the presence of strange and miraculous phenomena, every one asked the question: How does this happen?[2] How it happened is a matter of little or no consequence; but it is of consequence to know that it did happen

[1] Jews are named twice; by the first are meant those who inhabited Judea proper; by the second those who dwelt outside Judea and who on that day had come up to Jerusalem. By strangers or pilgrims of Rome are meant those Romans who had embraced Judaism and come to the Temple to worship God. By Asia is meant Asia Minor. It need not surprise us that so many foreigners from countries so distant came up to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. We know, and the Acts of the Apostles attest it, that at that time very many Pagans embraced Judaism and, while continuing to live in their own country, went up to Jerusalem for the great feasts of the Pasch, Pentecost, and the Tabernacles.

[2] From the enumeration of the various peoples, as given by St. Luke, we learn that some of them spoke the same tongue, such as the Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, who spoke the Persian. As every one knows, there are in every language many dialects and it is not any easier to understand the dialects than it is to understand a foreign tongue. We Lombards find it more difficult to understand the Genoese and Sicilian dialects than the French tongue.

and that the fact is absolutely beyond the power of man and therefore wholly and exclusively the work of God.[1]

Here also we find lying across our path the shadow of *rationalism,* which tries with its usual hypothesis to explain away the miracle, or failing in this, to obscure it and envelop it in the mists of doubt. In moments of ecstasy, says the rationalist, men full of faith and under the influence of the spirit utter sounds, inarticulate and disconnected, which are thought to be words of strange tongues and which an effort is made to interpret; and those present read their own thoughts and the desires of their heart into these incoherent syllables and broken, indistinct words. This is what is called glossolalia, or the gift of tongues, the effect of cerebral exaltation, accompanied with convulsions and contagious diseases, of which history furnishes us many examples.[2]

Do you understand, my friends? The apostles did not know what they were saying; they uttered

[1] How a tongue can by divine intervention be understood by those who know it not may be explained in two ways. The speaker, of course, speaks only one language, and God so alters the words that they sound in the ears of the listener as if they were his own tongue and excite in him corresponding ideas; or God without altering the words of the speaker, evokes, while he is speaking, ideas in the mind of the listener corresponding to those expressed by the unknown words. Which of the two ways was that made use of at Pentecost God alone knows.

[2] Junian, Pastoral Letter, anno. 3; Flechier, Select Letters, 1 p. 353, seq.; Karl Hase, History of the Church, S. 439, seq.

strange, incoherent words, without sense or meaning, as drunken men do and men in a delirium; the sense of these words was supplied by their hearers, who in doing so thought they recognized their own tongue.

Putting aside the manner of speaking and writing of those rationalists and representatives of modern science, as they delight to be called, a manner involved, obscure, oscillating between yes and no, full of apparent modesty, but in reality reeking with pride, the upshot of all their explanations is this: The apostles and their hearers were all the victims of nervous disease and of strange hallucinations; they thought that they were saying one thing, whereas they said another; that they understood a language, whereas they did not understand it; that they grasped the ideas of the one who was speaking, whereas they were grasping only their own, which they believed to be those of another; the hearers thought that the apostles spoke in many tongues, whereas they spoke no language at all; they uttered words without ideas, and ideas fermented in the mind. And what sort of ideas? Ideas that overturned the Pagan and Jewish world and created Christianity, ideas of marvelous beauty and power. In listening to those poor delirious and hallucinated apostles three thousand people were converted in a few hours, became their followers, formed the

primitive Church, and entered upon a life of such faith and fervor, of such self-denial and heroic sacrifice, as to make the world stand aghast. Those words, destitute of sense, unintelligible, the result of a most strange hallucination, received and treasured up by men, themselves under an hallucination and knowing not what they were doing, have produced Christianity, the greatest fact that history records! Wonderful power this of hallucination and of nervous disease! What a marvel is wrought by what these masters of modern criticism call *glossolalia!*[1] What a wonder is this new science which diffuses light everywhere and lays open with such clearness and simplicity the hidden causes of the greatest phenomena and brings the origin of the Christian religion within the limits of natural causes. A hurricane, a discharge of electric fluid, a trick of the nerves, resulting in *glossolalia,* and all Christianity, with all its marvels filling five continents and nineteen centuries of time, is perfectly explained! What clearer, more evident explanation than this can be asked! Any one who fails to understand it does not know what *modern criticism* is, that science

[1] Renan, The Apostles, cap. ii, p. 67, seq. In reading these pages of Renan one cannot help asking himself if the author in so writing is perpetrating a joke. And yet how many in reading him are fascinated by his style and admire these hypotheses, which I can not find words to characterize, as a masterpiece of a great thinker.

of sciences to which belongs the empire of the present and the future.

My friends, one word and I have done. The race of Adam is scattered over the whole earth; it has crossed rivers and oceans, it has traversed mountains and deserts; there is not an angle of the globe into which its dominion has not penetrated. It is divided into tribes and principalities, republics and kingdoms, empires and nations; it would seem that the great human family, sprung from one head, is going on separating and splitting into innumerable groups; laws, customs, beliefs, interests, jealousies, and other causes keep divided those who are the children of one sole Father in heaven and of one sole father on earth. If the force of expansion divides and disperses them, another mysterious force draws them together. The instinctive consciousness of brotherhood, the powerful attraction of fundamental truths, in the scientific, moral, and religious orders, which are common to all, is slowly drawing them all toward unity. Above all else the voice of Christ, the second Head of the human race, resounds through all the earth, secretly inviting and powerfully attracting all minds and hearts to itself by the light of truth and the flame of fraternal charity. On one occasion He said: "There shall be one sheepfold and one shepherd." He then foretold the formation of one single fam-

ily under one single father; it seemed a dream, a madness; but the work was begun on Pentecost day and has gone on and is still going on ceaselessly, and in the distant horizon of the future we are able to discern even now the fraternization of all peoples in the faith and charity of Christ and to salute with joy that blessed day when the human race, each nation retaining its distinctive characteristics, will form one single people and one single kingdom, the kingdom of God. This unity of the human family, the supreme goal of its progress, was symbolized and inaugurated in the miracle of Pentecost, when the preaching of the apostles was made intelligible to peoples so numerous and so diverse.[1] O great God, our true and only Father, hasten that day; fulfil the ardent wish that went forth from the heart of Thy Son when He said: "They shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

[1] Ideo Apostoli linguis omnium gentium locuti sunt, quia per linguas constat consociatio generis humani. Et oportebat per linguas omnium gentium significari istam societatem filiorum Dei et membrorum Christi futuram in omnibus gentibus (St. August. apud A Lapide).

DISCOURSE II

The Gospel of Pentecost

JESUS answered, and said to him: if any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him. He that loveth Me not, keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard is not Mine: but the Father's who sent Me. These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid. You have heard that I said to you: I go away and I come unto you. If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father: for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it came to pass: that when it shall come to pass, you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and in Me he hath not any thing. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me com-

mandment, so do I: Arise, let us go hence.—*John* xiv. 23–31.

¶ It does not seem fitting nor in keeping with the spirit of the feast of Pentecost to write about it or to speak of it without explaining the Gospel and Epistle proper to the mystery it commemorates. The Church, being the faithful interpreter of the mysteries she celebrates, always sets before us in the Gospels and Epistles those passages of Holy Writ which most directly refer to them. Hence, if we wish to study and to know precisely the meaning of any mystery that is commemorated, there is no better and no speedier way than to study and fathom the sense of the Epistle and Gospel read in the Mass of the feast on which such mystery is celebrated.

In the preceding Discourse I endeavored to explain that passage of the Acts of the Apostles, which is read in the Epistle, and to refute and to hold up to ridicule the explanation of rationalists, who seek to destroy the fact and the mystery which we celebrate and honor to-day. In this I propose to comment on the few verses taken from the Gospel of St. John, which has just now been solemnly sung. In these verses Jesus speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit and of the marvelous effects He would produce on the apostles, and in consequence on all those who should receive Him. The subject is strictly connected with the

mystery which we celebrate and is of its very nature interesting to all and worthy of your attention.

The words which we have set ourselves to elucidate are taken from that incomparable discourse at the Last Supper, in which Jesus Christ poured out all the wealth of His charity and which will forever remain a monument to the ineffable tenderness of His sacred Heart.

Before entering upon the commentary it will be necessary to go back a little way and take up the thread of the Discourse, in order that the connection with what follows may be made clear.

Jesus was comforting the apostles because He was about to leave them, assuring them that He was going away to prepare a place for them. To St. Thomas who said to Him: *"Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?"* He replied: *"I am the way,"* and He had already said: *"Whither I go you know and you know the way."* And to St. Philip, who said to Him: *"Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us,"* He replied: *"He that seeth Me seeth the Father also."* And He added: *"He that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he shall also do, and greater than these shall he do."* He said that He would hear their prayers and that the Holy Ghost would come and abide with them and be in them; and He added that through Him they

should know that *"I am in My Father and you are in Me and I in you."* And to the apostle Thaddeus He explained how it was that He willed to manifest Himself to them and not to the world. The answer of Our Lord is contained in the first words of the Gospel, which I am about to explain.

"If any one loves Me he will keep My word." Thaddeus had just asked Him: "How is it that after Thy resurrection Thou wilt manifest Thyself only to us and not to the world?" Jesus answered in effect: "Know thou that if I do not visibly manifest Myself to any but you I shall through My teaching and by faith manifest Myself to all who shall believe in Me, who shall observe My law and love Me."

There is a two-fold manifestation of Christ, the one visible to the eyes of the flesh, the other visible to the mind by faith. The first, although good in itself and holy, avails not if not combined with the second. What did the seeing of Jesus in the flesh profit the thousands who looked upon Him, listened to His words and conversed with Him, but yet did not believe in Him? Nothing whatever. On the other hand how many thousands and millions who never saw Him in His natural body, who never heard His voice, but who believed in Him, loved Him, and observed His law, were saved and now are blissful in heaven with Him and live of His life? Let us not say then: "O,

if I had but seen Jesus Christ! If I had but listened to His voice!" Let us believe in Him; let us unite ourselves to Him with a living, active love and we shall please Him as well, aye, better than if we had seen Him with our eyes and heard Him with our ears. The flesh, Our Lord assures us, profiteth not; the spirit giveth life, that is, the soul if it clings to God by faith and charity will participate of His very life.

Jesus still pursues the same thought, saying: "*And My Father will love him and we will come to him and will make our abode with him.*" This is a stupendous saying. He seems to speak thus to Thaddeus: "I shall show Myself visibly to you; but I shall show Myself invisibly through faith and love to any one who so wills. Nay more, I say to you that not only shall I show Myself by faith to any one who so wills, but My Father will come with Me and We will take up our abode within him."

But how, O divine Master, wilt Thou with the Father take up Thy abode in him who believes Thy word and keeps it? Is the Holy Spirit separate from Thee and from the Father? Or do the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost leave heaven and come down into the souls of the righteous? Is not God immense and therefore everywhere? How can He come into a soul and go out from it, approach to it, and withdraw from it?

God is immense and unchangeable; He is everywhere by His presence, His action, and His essence. To imagine that He comes and goes, enters into and departs from a soul, would be unworthy of Him and contrary to His infinite perfection. If we hold such language, as do also the Sacred Books, we do so, as they do, because of the feebleness and extreme poverty of language itself and of our conceptions, which are not capable of rising to a knowledge of the nature of God; but what the tongue so feebly expresses the mind, sustained by faith, corrects and completes.

God is everywhere by His essence. This every Christian knows and believes. But it is also true that He is not everywhere by faith and grace. You will ask: "How can this be?" Listen and you will understand.

Each of us knows a great many persons, some of whom are our neighbors and some are at a distance. But how do we know them? We know them by their figure and by their countenance; their words and acts are in our minds and memories, and in a sense they exist within us as knowledge exists in the mind of one who possesses it. But there is another and a more noble way in which persons and things may live within us. The things and the persons we know live in our thoughts, but we may be indifferent toward

them; we may even hate and spurn them. They then simply find lodgment in the mind. But if, in contemplating them and keeping them in our thoughts we come to love them, what happens? They pass from the mind into the heart; from being simply objects of thought they go down into the sanctuary of the will, and we bind what, whether persons or things, we heretofore possessed by knowledge, to us by the bonds of love, and according to the greater or less intensity of our affection they become one with us. Then these persons or things take up their abode within us, and they abide within us in such sense that we can each say, "I hold them in my heart; they live in my soul." They are there within us by knowledge, which is a small matter; but they are also within us by love, which is everything. This is the teaching of St. Thomas, founded on the very nature of things, and it is in this sense, my friends, that Jesus Christ with the Father and Holy Ghost makes His abode in the soul of the righteous.[1]

Children by love bear their parents about with them in their hearts; and so the just bear about

[1] St. Augustine says beautifully: Dilectio sanctos discernit a mundo, quae facit unanimes habitare in domo, in qua facit Pater et Filius mansionem, qui et dilectionem donant, quibus in finem donabunt suam manifestationem. Veniunt ad nos, dum venimus ad eos; veniunt subveniendo, illuminando, implendo; venimus obediendo, intuendo, capiendo (Cornel. à Lapide).

with them in their hearts God Himself, the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And how long will God abide in our hearts? As long as we love Him and preserve His grace within us. And when does God leave us? When we cease to love Him; when we prefer a creature before Him and give our hearts to others. Then He still abides in our minds, as known by reason and faith; but He is no longer in our hearts, because we no longer love Him and the sweet tie that bound us to Him is snapped by sin. And now let us go on with the Gospel commentary.

"*He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words.*" Jesus seems to say: "How can I make My resurrection known, how can I manifest Myself to those who neither believe in Me nor love Me? They are incapable of being benefited by My resurrection and the fault is all theirs, because they do not love the truth, nor will they do aught to possess it. I say My word, or what is the same, My doctrine, but bear well in mind it is not properly Mine, but My Father's, who sent Me." Jesus here refers to His teaching as to that of His Father, and He does so not only as man, but as God. As man everything that Jesus Christ is, or does, or says, all belongs to the triune God, because as man, He, equally with ourselves, is created and receives everything from the divine bounty; but also as God, Jesus Christ must say

that His teaching and all that He is, is of God to whom He is beholden for all. And why? Because from Him by eternal generation He receives His very substance and the knowledge which He communicates to us. "Hence," He says, "My word or doctrine is Mine and it is My Father's; He is the spring, I am the rivulet; He is the sun, I am the light that goes out from it; all that is Mine is His, because I and He are one." This is the meaning of the words of Jesus Christ: *"And the word which you have heard is not Mine, but the Father's, who sent Me."* And this Jesus said to lift up the minds of the apostles from His human nature to His divine and to comfort them in those moments of bitter anguish.

Then going on with His discourse He said: *"These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you.* The truths that I have announced to you during all the time I have been with you, these truths you have heard, indeed, but some of them you have not always fully comprehended, and others were obscure to you and even wholly unintelligible; but be not troubled; in a little while you will clearly comprehend them." And who will give us a knowledge of them? *"The Paraclete* or *Advocate,* the *Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name. He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you."* This *Paraclete,* or *Com-*

forter and *Advocate,* of whom Jesus speaks and whom He promises to His beloved apostles, is undoubtedly a Person, because He is made equal to Christ Himself, holds His place, continues His work, and is said to be sent of the Father, that is, to have, like the Son, His origin from the Father. Hence, in this verse the august Trinity is clearly set before us, the Father is mentioned by name; Jesus Christ speaks; and the Holy Ghost is represented as sent by the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, to teach all truth. He is called in this place the *Comforter* and *Advocate,* because at that time of distressing and anxious expectation the apostles were very sad and depressed and they had great need of comfort and support. But how could Christ say that the Father would send the Holy Ghost in His name: *"Whom the Father will send in My name"?* Because the Father and the Son send and breathe forth the Holy Spirit by a single act, in a way analogous to that by which I, through my intellect and knowledge, kindle the flame of love; and because the coming down of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles was due to the merits of Jesus Christ.

It is said that the Holy Ghost will teach the apostles all things: *"He will teach you all things."* Is it meant that the Holy Ghost, when He filled the apostles with light and strength, taught them all sciences, human and divine? Is it meant that,

at the moment when the apostles received the Holy Ghost, they knew mathematics and geometry, physics and profane history, philosophy and astronomy, geology and all the other natural sciences, which in this age are justly the boast of the human family? Assuredly not. Christ came upon this earth not to teach us these sciences, which He left us free to discuss within their own proper limits, but to teach us the science of heaven, the science of God and of the soul, the science of eternal salvation, the science which makes us virtuous and holy and His sons by adoption. This is a wonderful fact, my friends. Jesus Christ, the Man-God, knew perfectly all natural sciences, which are now making so great a stir in the world; He knew sciences still greater and incomparably more numerous, which as time goes on will be discovered; but neither in His discourses which we have preserved for us in the Gospel, nor in His teachings which have been handed down to us by tradition, is there a single hint or a single word concerning those natural sciences which are the glory of our age. He could have taught the apostles at least some of those mysteries of nature; He could have lifted the veil and revealed some of those stupendous discoveries which later on amazed the world and changed the face of society. With the wealth of such knowledge and of such discoveries the apos-

tles would have filled the world with wonder, would have won over all men, and would in an incredibly short time have subdued the most gifted intellects. But Jesus Christ did nothing of the sort; He confined His teaching to the truths of religion and morality and these alone He wished His apostles to teach. And this, my friends, is a fact to be noted and points out to us priests, the continuators of the work of Christ and of His apostles, the path to be pursued in the exercise of our ministry. A knowledge of sciences, profane and natural, is both useful and necessary to us priests for the honor of the Church and the defense of the Faith, and moreover they lift the mind up to God and throw a fuller light upon His majesty and power; but these are not the sciences that we are to take with us into the temple or into the chair of truth, or that we are to preach to the people; and neither does the teaching office of the Church nor the assistance of the Holy Ghost, promised by Christ, extend directly to these sciences. The natural sciences are the patrimony of human reason, which may roam at will over this field and daily achieve new and more splendid triumphs.[1]

[1] Of course, since truth can not contradict truth, and since revealed truth is superior to natural truth, every assertion contrary to the truth as revealed by faith, as the Council of the Vatican has defined, must be erroneous; and the Church, to which infallible authority has committed the deposit of revelation, has

Let us return to the text of the Gospel which we are explaining. It was not without a profound reason that Christ said that the Holy Ghost "*would bring all things to their minds whatsoever He should have said to them.*" Why did He say that the Holy Ghost would bring all things to their minds? During the three years of His public life Jesus Christ had taught the apostles all, or nearly all, the truths necessary for the saving of souls and for the government of the Church. But had they understood them as they should? Some they did understand, but the bulk of them were stored away confusedly in their memories, while others they had forgotten or misunderstood; [1] and it was therefore necessary to refresh their memories and to illuminate their minds in order that they might be able to announce them to mankind, and this was the office of the Holy Ghost. He was the light shining down into the depths of their souls by which they were enabled to read what Jesus Christ had written there and which they could not discern; He, too, gave them strength and courage fearlessly to proclaim all this to the entire world.

for this very reason a full right, though indirect and limited within certain confines which she will never overstep, to take cognizance also of the natural sciences in their relations to revealed truths.

[1] Suggeret, idest commemorabit vobis: pertinet enim ad gratiam etiam non oblivisci saluberrima monita (St. Augustin., apud à Lapide).

Any one reading the discourse at the Last Supper will readily perceive that it is not consecutive and that its various parts are not interwoven, as, if I may so say, they would be in a formal address.

On that memorable evening Jesus Christ spent some hours with His disciples. His passion was near at hand; He was soon to separate from them, and He gave free vent to His feelings and poured out His whole heart to them. Hence His words are broken and He passes from subject to subject. He cheers and advises them; He promises, comforts, and beseeches. Like a loving father setting out on a long journey and taking leave of his children, He multiplies His entreaties, He repeats His farewells.

Then suddenly breaking off His discourse and speaking out of the fulness of His soul He says: *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth do I give unto you."* What language! What an outpouring of the heart! What tenderness in these reiterated words! True this was the usual salutation among the Hebrews, "Peace be with you." But here the solemnity of the occasion, the frequent repetitions, the added words: *"My peace. Not as the world gives do I give unto you"*; His imminent departure, and more than all the accent of inexpressible tenderness and glowing affection with which He uttered the salutation gave to it

a meaning and a force wholly its own. We can fancy we almost see Jesus with His hands outstretched toward His apostles, His forehead clouded with a mild and tranquil sadness, His luminous eyes filled with love and wet with tears, pouring out His whole soul. *"Peace I leave with you,"* He says. "It is the only heritage I leave; it is My best wish and the pledge of every blessing—peace, true, solid, enduring; peace with God whose children you are; peace among yourselves, regarding one another as brothers and loving one another as such; peace with all, even with your enemies and persecutors; peace with your own hearts. This is not the false and deceitful peace of the world; it is My peace, a peace that ensures serenity of mind and simplicity of heart, a peace that is the bond of love and the mate of charity;[1] a peace that keeps guard over your senses and over your intellect and transcends all that man can conceive." May this peace, my friends, which Christ gave to His beloved apostles, a peace that is the daughter of justice and the companion of virtue, a peace that gladdens us in our exile, consoles us and makes us happy in the very midst of sorrows and sufferings, may this peace abide always in our souls.

Jesus goes on drawing out this idea of peace

[1] Pax est serenitas mentis, simplicitas cordis, amoris vinculum, consortium charitas (St. August. in Joan. apud à Lapide).

and comforting His apostles who were gathered about Him, grieved, discouraged, and silent. "*Let not your heart be troubled,*" He said, "*nor let it be afraid.*" Such words as these we, too, are wont to speak to those in distress and threatened with some impending disaster. It is a way we have of comforting and aiding those passing through some severe trial. Our words reveal our goodness of heart and our desire to assist them. But, alas, upon our tongue such words are but an augury, an expression of our good wishes; we can not infuse into the souls of others the strength and energy of will that will enable them to conquer in the battle of life. But Jesus, who is God, He alone can do what His words express; He can fill the soul of him who trusts in Him and goes to Him for aid with strength to overcome himself, to thrust aside the obstacles that he encounters on his way through life, and to still the tempests that rise in the depths of his soul. He alone can truthfully say: "*Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.*"

"You are," He went on, "in the midst of men, who, hating Me, hate you also; you are as lambs in the midst of wolves, and, what makes your present condition still more trying is that I, your master and guide, am going from you; I am going to My death, and what a death! But let not even this trouble you or make you afraid or cause you

to yield to sadness and grief; for if I go, I will not stay away; if I go to death and to the death of the cross, I shall rise again and come back to you: *you have heard that I said to you: I go away and I come unto you.* Nay more, I say to you that if you really love Me you would surely rejoice that I go to the Father: *If you love Me, you would indeed be glad because I go to the Father.*"

If the words, "*I go away and I come unto you,*" refer to Christ's death and resurrection and to His appearance to the apostles, the words, "*I go to the Father,*" refer not only to His resurrection and His appearance to His apostles, but also to His ascension into heaven. "Yet a few hours," says Christ, "and I shall die and rise again and go to the Father; yet a few hours and My pains and sorrows will have an end and I shall begin a life of purest joy, a life of perfect bliss, that will never end. I know you love Me, but if you truly love Me and truly wish Me well, far from sorrowing over My going away and over My death, you would be glad. A friend seeing a friend set out for a distant land, where he knows he will be happy, rejoices at his departure; children seeing their father set out for a far-away country, where he is to receive dominion and be crowned king, make high festival in bidding him Godspeed. As so also ought you do to Me, if

you love Me, as I know you really do. I quit the earth for heaven, a land of exile for My true country, a place of humiliation and sorrow for a place of glory and delight, and why should you not be glad? I go to My Father in heaven, He is greater than I, and with Him My felicity will be complete: *I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.*"

Why, O Lord, dost Thou say that the Father is greater than Thou? Art not Thou and the Father but one? Art not Thou in the Father and the Father in Thee? Art not Thou consubstantial with the Father and in all respects perfectly equal to Him, as we believe, as faith teaches, and as Thou hast often taught? Why, then, dost Thou say that the Father is greater than Thou?

Jesus Christ is God and man, true God and true man; as God He is equal to the Father, and in this sense the Father is not greater than He; but as man He is not equal to the Father, but inferior, and in this sense it is most true to say that the Father is greater than He. And that Jesus Christ did mean that the Father is greater than He, inasmuch as He is man, is clear from the words: "*I go to the Father,*" because to say that Jesus *goes* to the Father can be understood only of His human nature.

Still there is a sense in which the Father can be said to be greater than Jesus Christ, even

considered as God, and that without detriment to His divine nature. And how? The Father is the Principle without a principle, He is the fountain of the Son, and with the Son He is also the fountain of the Holy Ghost; the Father is the sun and the Son is the light that goes out from it; the Father is the root, the Son is the flower. By reason, then, of origin the Father precedes the Son, and in this sense the Father can be said to be, and is said to be greater than the Son. This dignity of principle, which belongs to the Father in respect to the Son and on account of which the Father is said to be greater than the Son, does not prevent the nature of both the one and the other being one and the same and common to both, and hence there is between them a perfect and absolute equality.

Sun and light have one and the same nature; they are one; but to our minds the sun is the principle and cause of light, and not the latter of the former; the nature and life of root and flower are one and the same, common to both, but the root is first in our thoughts and then the flower, because the flower comes forth from the root, and hence a sort of superior dignity, suggested not by diversity of nature, but by order and origin, attaches to the root as compared with the flower, to the sun as compared with the light. In this way, while according to nature the Father

and Son are perfectly equal, the Father can be said to be greater than the Son.

As the one purpose of Jesus Christ was to strengthen the faith of the apostles in His divine personality, this being the indefectible basis of His teaching and the supreme motive of their trust, He went on to give a fresh proof of it, in words which they were shortly to see fully verified, adding: *"And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass, you may believe."* He had foretold His death, His resurrection, and other details, which the eyes of the apostles would see and their hands touch, which no one could humanly have foretold to a certainty, and seeing which fulfilled to the letter, what were they necessarily to conclude? That the future was to Him as the present and that they must believe His words, since they were, as He had clearly affirmed them to be, not the words of man, but the words of the Son of God. This was the sure foundation of the faith of the apostles, as it is also the foundation of our faith, which rests upon that of the apostles, as in a building one stone rests upon another and all upon the first, or foundation stone. Our certitude, though centuries intervene between us and them, is the self-same certitude that the apostles possessed, because we are bound to them by an uninterrupted succession and with them form one

whole, as stones bound together form one whole edifice.

Jesus looking round upon the apostles added: *"I will not now speak many things with you."* These words, spoken with an accent of more than ordinary tenderness and emotion, deepened the cloud of sadness that had already settled upon the countenances of His beloved disciples. It was as if He had said: "I have finished My work; I am about to depart; the hour of departing, the hour of My death is approaching, it is already at hand: *For the prince of this world cometh."*

But who, O dear Jesus, is the prince of this world? Art not Thou the Son of God, the very Word, by whom all things were created? Hast Thou not said that all power is given Thee in heaven and on earth? Art not Thou the absolute master of all things? How, then, canst Thou say that there is another prince of this world, who will rise up against Thee? Who is this prince?

Jesus Christ, being God, is the true and only Lord of heaven and earth. But there is another whom, for the great ends of His wisdom and goodness, Jesus permits to invade His kingdom, to attempt to usurp His dominions, and to rise in rebellion against Him. And this one is called the prince of darkness, the seducer, and the tempter, and is specifically designated as the *malignant one* or the *devil.* He began his revolt

against the Man-God in heaven and renewed it on earth. He hates the Man-God ferociously, because the Man-God was the rock against which he dashed his pride and against which his power was broken; because to the Man-God, as man, and therefore inferior in nature to himself, he was forced to bend the knee, for, though man, Christ was also his God and his Creator. He hates Him and therefore stirs up against Him the synagogue, the chiefs of the people, Judas and his satellites, in the hope of sweeping Him from the face of the earth and of destroying His kingdom in its birth. The phrase, "Prince of this world," that is, of the wicked, indicates the power of this *malignant one,* which is certainly exceedingly great; but no matter how great it is it is always confined within the limits that God has set to it and within which He permits the wicked one to act both for the triumph of the good and for their glory and His. The power of the *malignant one* can not pass beyond the threshold of human liberty, for liberty sustained by the aid of grace, whenever this is asked as it should be, is powerful to withstand the most furious assaults. Finally we are taught by science and by reason itself that, in this colossal and tremendous duel between Christ and the prince of this world, Christ and His followers will be completely and decisively victorious.

"The prince of this world with all his satellites," Christ seems to say, "will rise up against Me, make war on Me, murder Me; but he will find in Me no shadow of sin, and far from extending His dominion over Me, he will be deprived of that which he now exercises over men, for I will make satisfaction for them, I will wrench them from his hands at the cost of My blood, and the world will thus see how great a love I bear My Father, a love that has impelled Me to do His will even unto death."

My friends: On the great battlefield of this earth only one conquered and overthrew forever the prince of the world and that was Jesus Christ; He alone conquered and overthrew him by His own strength. Would we wish that we, each of us, might be victorious as He was, that His victory might be ours? There is only one way of bringing this about and that is by uniting ourselves to Jesus Christ through faith and charity, by becoming one with Him, and then will His victory be our victory.

DISCOURSE III

The Foundation of the Church

THE prophets through thirty centuries, in hundreds of passages and in forms the most diverse, reaching down into the future saw and described the Saviour of the world and related the work to be accomplished by Him so faithfully that, were their utterances all put together and arranged in due order, they would give the record of the Gospel in anticipation. The image under which the prophets most frequently foreshadowed the expected Saviour is that of a great and triumphant conqueror who, having vanquished his enemies, founds a kingdom that will have no end, that will endure for all time, that will set up its tents in the east and in the west, a kingdom of truth and justice, into which all nations and peoples shall enter and which shall be pre-eminently His work.

Jesus Christ came, and, making His own the language of the prophets, clearing the meaning when it was obscure, began to preach and to proclaim what He called the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven and His kingdom. There is not a page of the Gospel where this kingdom is not mentioned, not a parable that is not a figure

of it. It was the end, the purpose of the mission of Christ; it was the epitome of all His works; it was the fruit of His passion and death. As you will have anticipated, this kingdom of Christ is the Church.

During the three years of His public life He prepared the elements of this Church; He gathered about Him a group of twelve poor men; He instructed them and gave them simple rules to follow in the arduous undertaking which He was about to commit to them. When His hour had come He withdrew His visible presence from them and, going up into heaven, left the beloved twelve gathered together in one place awaiting the divine gift, which He had so often promised them and which was to transform them into other men. After ten days the promise was fulfilled; the Holy Spirit came down in visible form upon that little band of men and they felt themselves filled with a new strength; and we on this feast, after twenty centuries, joyously celebrate that auspicious day on which they went forth from the Cenacle and began to preach and to lay the foundation of the new kingdom.

This day of Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, just as is Christmas the birthday of her founder, Jesus Christ. He for nine months lay hidden and unknown in the spotless womb of the Virgin and, coming forth from it, was saluted by

heaven and earth as the Son of God and the Saviour of men; and the Church, prepared by Him with patient toil, was for nine days shut up and hidden in the Cenacle, and on the tenth she came forth radiant with Pentecostal light and stood before the world as the faithful executrix of the command received from Jesus Christ Himself. On Pentecost day she came forth from the Cenacle in the persons of the twelve apostles, and to-day we see her spread over the whole earth and the twelve apostles have grown to be twelve hundred bishops; on the day of Pentecost these twelve apostles appeared before the world with Peter, a poor fisherman, at their head, and to-day twelve hundred bishops appear before the world and at their head is the successor of St. Peter, who sits enthroned in the Vatican. From that day to this, from Peter to Pius X, twenty centuries have passed. Who of us, running back with the rapidity of thought through that long period in the history and in the life of the Church, does not feel awed in the presence of such grandeur and forced in his own despite to cry out: "The finger of God is here"?

On this Pentecost day, the day of the birth of the Church, I invite you to dwell with me on these two simple truths: first, on the end for which Jesus Christ founded the Church and the supreme wisdom which is manifest in this work; second,

on the two principal characteristics or properties with which the Church must be endowed. To state the subject of this discourse is also to state its importance.

Why has God created the earth on which we dwell, with its mountains and seas, its rivers and plains, its hills and valleys, with its trees and animals, its birds and the creatures we see upon it? Everything here below has been created for man, everything is subject to his sway and everything is directly or indirectly ordained to serve him. Faith teaches this and experience confirms it. Man, dowered with reason and will, though in physical strength so feeble and so far inferior to many creatures, subjugates them all and makes them docile to his bidding. He is the king of the earth.

And why has God created man himself? Assuredly not to serve creatures, for He is by nature their lord and it would be shameful for a master to become a servant of his servants.

If all things should serve man, because he is superior to them, so ought man to serve him who is his superior, and I know of no one superior to man but his Creator and his God. Man, then, should serve God, he should tend toward God, he should reach God, and in Him he should rest as in his ultimate goal.

But to attain this most exalted end, one alone

worthy of man, what is required? What means must be employed?

Two things are necessary, and these are sufficient. Man's body follows whither the soul leads, and man's soul follows whither the mind leads and the will moves. Again, the mind follows the light of truth that illuminates the way, and the will moves and follows the force that attracts it and draws it on toward what is good. The two wings necessary for man to be able to rise on high and take flight toward his goal, his supreme end, God, to be able to attain this end and realize the purpose of his being, are the knowledge of truth and the strength of grace. Take from a bird one of the two wings which nature has given it, and it falls to the ground unable to rise. Take from man the knowledge of truth and of his end and he will lie dormant; give him the knowledge of truth and of his end, but take from him the will, the strength of grace, and he is motionless; he is like a locomotive in which the steam power is exhausted. In order, then, that man may be able to rise above the earth and go toward God truth and grace are necessary, a light to illuminate the way to be trod and grace to give strength to pursue it. And whence is this light or truth, this grace or strength to be drawn? Will he draw light and truth from himself? Impossible. Can light be drawn from darkness, or can truth be

drawn from him who has it not and is in search of it? Will he draw grace and strength from the depths of his own being? Absurd. Grace can not be drawn from him who has it not, nor strength from him who can do nothing. Whence, then, will man seek the light to guide him and the strength to sustain him? Only from Him who is light itself and truth itself; only from Him who is strength itself, from God.

God, then, who created the first man, took him to Himself, taught him, lifted him up and sustained him. But he fell, his intellect was darkened and, no longer seeing his way before him, he went astray; his step was uncertain, he sank deeper and deeper into the mire of sin, he could no longer take a step forward, unless God came to his aid and renewed the marvels of His charity; he would have perished had not God a second time illuminated his mind and strengthened his will. God, then, sent heralds and messengers to announce to man His truth and to bear to him His grace. He sent patriarchs, prophets, and priests; He sent Moses, He gave the Law; but still man groped feebly in the dark; he begged for more light, for a larger knowledge of the truth, for a stronger arm to lift him up and support him. Then the Son of God Himself, the immutable light and fountain of truth, clad Himself in the vesture of man, made Himself like man and

taught him by word and work; He was as an inextinguishable light shining out in the midst of the dense darkness that encompassed man, as a divine flame that warmed his heart; He filled him with new energy and spoke thus to him: "Man, be up and doing, rise and follow Me."

This was the work of Christ, the teacher and guide, the physician and restorer, the strength and life of man, as He Himself in the Gospels over and over again affirms that He is. Through Him man again gained a perfect knowledge of the truth, lived again a divine life, rose once more to his pristine grandeur and was made a participator of the divine nature itself.

But Jesus having completed the term of His mortal life, having consummated the work of redemption, quitted this earth. As long as He abided here below He was the teacher and the light, He was life and strength; He was everything to man, because, as Holy Writ says, all received of His fulness. But what was to happen after His departure? Was the light He had brought among men to be extinguished; was the fountain of supernatural life that welled up from His Heart to be dried up; were the benefits of redemption to be restricted to those few who lived during His stay on earth? What was to become of the generations yet unborn? Were they to be deprived of the truth and life of which He was

the unfailing source? Were this the fact the work of Jesus Christ had been meager indeed, unworthy at once of His bounty and wisdom. As God He had created all men; as man He ought to save all men. He suffered for all, He died for all, and therefore the fruit of His redemption, as far as He was concerned, ought to be offered to all, and He did offer it to all by making the sun of truth to shine and the waters of grace to flow for the whole human race. And how did He do this? Let us explain.

There can be no doubt but that Jesus Christ, having gone up to heaven and withdrawn His visible presence from man, could, had He so willed, have Himself directly illuminated the minds of all men, have filled their souls with His grace, have wholly transformed and sanctified them. Who could have prevented Him? Could a single intellect, a single will, a single heart, have closed its doors against Him? And if they had been shut in His face could not He, the Almighty, have forced them and broken them down?

But He would not have things thus. When He quitted the earth He left upon the earth those who, in His name and by His authority, were to carry on His work; He called about Him a small band of twelve men, and from among them He chose one and constituted him their head, and gave them this commission: "I am the light of the

world, so also be ye the light of the world; I have taught you, do ye teach all peoples; I have baptized, do ye likewise baptize; I have pardoned sin, do ye too remit sin; I have given My body for food and My blood for drink, do ye do the same; I have all power in heaven and on earth, this power I give to you; and through you and in you I shall be on earth until the end of time."

By these words Jesus Christ established His kingdom and founded His Church, and through her He lives and teaches, governs and sanctifies men; she is the continuation of Christ. To go to Christ we must pass through the Church, as to cross from bank to bank of a river we must go over a bridge or be carried over in a boat. Christ said that we can not go to the Father except through Him, He being the mediator between God and man; so also we can not go to Christ except through the Church, she being the mediatrix between us and Him. Outside the Church there is no salvation, because outside the kingdom of Christ all is darkness and death.

And why was Christ pleased to put His Church between Himself and men? Why did He ordain that she should be His only teacher, the dispenser of His truth and grace and the continuator of His mission? Why did Jesus Christ, in constituting the Church the depository of all His power and of all the treasures of grace abdicate, so to say,

in her favor His divine authority? Would it not have been wiser to have kept all this authority Himself than to set up any mediator whatever between Himself and redeemed man, a mediator too, which, being necessarily made up of human elements, must eclipse His own light and embarrass, if not destroy, His action? This is what our brethren outside the Church say. They put into the hand of man a Book, which, they say, was given by God; they say that this Book contains all truth, and that any one reading it knows without the aid of an interpreter what God wants him to do and has a certain knowledge of the way to heaven. No authority whatever, they say, must be put between God and man, neither Church, nor priesthood, nor teaching office, nothing, for to do so would be an insupportable insolence, an intrusion, an outrage at once to God, who has no need of mediators, and to the human conscience, which has a right to have an understanding directly with God, its creator, sole guide, and judge. So these good people think. They make every Christian a priest unto himself; they deny the foundation of a society, or of the Church, which holds the place of Christ, which teaches, governs, and sanctifies souls in His name, and in place of an organic body or society they substitute the individual, and make him the lord and master of himself.

Although this manner of teaching, of governing

and sanctifying souls was possible to God, as we have said, He would not sanction it, and it was wise in Him not to do so, and to ordain that truth and grace should come to men through the Church, that is, through a perpetual magistracy, chosen and fashioned by Himself. It is not difficult to show this. Kindly follow me.

The God who created all things, who preserves them and leads them on to perfection, is the same God who created men, who preserves them, lifts them up to a knowledge of Himself, fills them with His grace, and wills that they should be made happy with His own happiness. God, the creator and author of the natural order, is also the creator and author of the supernatural order. Hence the great laws that govern the natural order will appear also in the supernatural order. The works of Michael Angelo are many and most various, but in all of them the eye can discern the same hand, the same chisel, the same genius of Michael Angelo.

What is the great sovereign law that regulates and governs the natural order? It is this: God created the universe; He deposited in it the germs or seeds of all creatures; but their formation and development depend on fixed laws. God created the first germs or seeds of every plant; He produced the first couple of living things,[1] and by

[1] The origin of man we learn from Genesis; it also tells us

virtue of the propagating force that He deposited in them He multiplies plants and living things according to their kind. God created the first pair of human beings and by them He peopled the earth. Have you ever seen a single plant appear upon the earth, a single bird or fish or animal, that derived its origin immediately from God, or without the concurrence of natural secondary causes? Have you ever seen a man coming into the world who had not a father and forefathers, and who by successive generations was not the son of the first human pair? Assuredly not. God therefore, the primary author of all life, whether vegetable or animal, preserves it, propagates it, multiplies it constantly by the concurrence of secondary causes, and without this concurrence He does nothing. God creates all human souls and He deposits in them the germs of two distinct forces, which form the character and are the glory of man, namely, intelligence and will. Primarily they come from God alone, from God, the Creator, but how are they developed and perfected? Did

what was the origin of the first plants and the first animals, saying: "Let the earth bring forth," etc. The true meaning of the Biblical phrase, Let the earth bring forth, is clearly: "Let there be brought forth upon the earth," since to say that life comes forth from matter is at once ridiculous and absurd. How did the first animals and the first plants produce themselves? From their germs and from the first perfect created couple. The unvarying law of evolution seems to demand that all life shall begin with the imperfect and go on to the perfect, that it shall rise from the lower to the higher.

they develop and perfect themselves? Or are they developed and perfected through the immediate action of God? No. They are developed and perfected continuously through the action or influence of their kind, of parents and teachers, of men generally, of their surroundings, of the society of past ages, and of the society in the midst of which they live. It is ever the action of God, communicated by means of creatures, that is, by secondary causes, which He associates with Himself. He begins by Himself, because He alone is the Creator, but He does not continue His work except with the concurrence of creatures themselves. He is like an electric spark, which is not communicated except through a conducting wire; like the force of attraction, which does not act unless it is transmitted through a medium.

My friends, God in the natural order, in the threefold kingdom of the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal, in the astronomical world, in the intellectual and moral world, in the political and social world, works always and everywhere by means of secondary causes. Can you name an exception? Then there is a miracle. Now the universal and constant law to which the whole natural order is subject is this: The action of God in the conservation and development of the universe, of all life upon the earth, in air and water, everywhere, manifests itself associated

with forces created by Himself. Where God does not find a creature, a docile instrument, His hand is stayed; and if He does not stay it and He works alone, we have a miracle that transcends the forces of nature. These are truths that contain in themselves their own demonstration, and of this you will be persuaded if you survey the whole universe and examine the unvarying laws by which it is preserved.

St. Thomas gave expression in his own simple and concise style to a magnificent truth when he said: "Grace, that is, the whole supernatural order, works according to nature," which is equivalent to saying that it follows the great lines, the stupendous laws, that are apparent in the physical and metaphysical world of nature. And it is fitting that it should be so, since the author and ruler of the two worlds, the natural and the supernatural, is one and the same God.

If, then, in the government, conservation, and development of the natural world and in all the innumerable categories of beings of which it is made up, God displays His action and does everything with the concurrence of the beings themselves and without this concurrence does nothing, reason demands that He should do the same in the supernatural world or in the kingdom established by Him on earth, namely, in the Church and in all her manifestations and operations.

In all this immense creation of the supernatural world, in its conservation and propagation, in all the great phases in which it manifests its life, the first, the supreme, the efficient cause, must, as is clear, be God Himself, the Man-God, but not without the concurrence of free causes, which He takes and with which He works, as with instruments, and which together with Him constitute the full and adequate cause. The secondary causes *can do nothing* without the First Cause, but the first cause ordinarily will do nothing without the co-operation of the secondary causes.

God alone is the truth that enlightens all minds, but how does the truth reach the minds of men? Through the medium of the Church, of the apostles, and of the priesthood, and the mystery of to-day is the proof of this.

God alone in the sacrament of Baptism and Penance remits sins, no matter how numerous and great they may be; He alone pours grace into the soul and constitutes sinners His sons by adoption. But he does all this at all times through the medium of the Church and of the priesthood. Jesus Christ offers Himself in the Sacrifice of the Altar; He changes bread and wine into His body and blood and gives Himself as food and drink to men. But this mass of miracles He unceasingly works through the Church and the priesthood. Through them He imprints on the

souls of men the character of sons, of soldiers and ministers; through them He comforts the dying in the last trial of life; through them He sanctifies marriage; through them He governs the people; through them earth communicates with heaven and heaven with earth; through them God comes down upon the earth and men rise up to heaven; in short, through the Church and the priesthood the unquenchable light of truth shall ever be kept burning among men and the vivifying warmth of grace shall invest and permeate their souls, and through them Jesus Christ lives and works and will live and work on the earth until time is no more.[1]

This economy of the supernatural world, fashioned on the economy of the natural world, by which the action of God is permanently bound up with the action of the Church and of the priesthood, is full of wisdom and is clearly wholly conformable to our nature and beneficial to it. Of this there can be no doubt. The neces-

[1] As we have said, God *ordinarily* communicates His faith and gives His grace by means of the Church or the priesthood. Still this is not saying that God does not at times work directly upon souls without the intervention of the priesthood; however we should venture to say that this way is *extraordinary*. A sinner can receive pardon of his sins and hence sanctifying grace, without either Baptism or Penance, by perfect charity and without the direct action of the Church; but there is always a desire, at least implicit, of receiving the sacraments of the Church; so true is it that God always wills that between Him and us there shall be the Church, the *ordinary* means by which He communicates with man.

sity of obtaining the truth of God and His grace through the medium of the Church establishes the most honorable relations and the noblest ties among men; it makes them all brothers and unites them together as members of one and the same family. The Head of the Church, the whole sacerdotal caste, bishops and priests, acting in God's name, take upon themselves the office of teachers and fathers of the great body of the faithful, and these in turn acknowledge themselves as their disciples and children. Pontiff, bishops, and priests communicate truth and grace to the faithful, and the faithful receive both at their hands. Divine life comes down from on high and diffuses itself through the sacerdotal body, and from them it descends into the body of the faithful and circulates through all its members; and through the priesthood it again returns whence it came. Through Pontiff, bishops, and priests the great fatherhood of God is widened, and creates a grand sonship among men and unites them all in the bond of charity, thus producing in the Church on earth a feeble image of the ineffable Trinity in heaven. In the natural order the father gives natural life to his children; in the supernatural order the priesthood gives supernatural life to the faithful, and thus to the ties of human paternity are added the far more noble and holy ties of divine paternity.

There is a chain of causes and effects wonderfully interwoven one with another, and the source of it all is there on high in the bosom of the eternal Father. The spiritual paternity carries with it, still more than does the natural paternity, the authority and power to rule and govern spiritual children and lays upon spiritual children the duty of obedience; there is a twofold bond of authority and dependence that binds all the children of God together and constitutes them one great family of believers. In fathers who rule there is a ceaseless exercise of charity and patience, of prudence and fortitude; in children who obey there is a ceaseless exercise of humility, self-denial, and sacrifice; among all there is a compassionate sympathy, a mutual respect, and a noble rivalry to aid one another. Take away the organism of the Church, let each and every man receive truth and grace immediately from God, and you have isolated him; he is sufficient to himself. His eyes are lifted up on high; he cares nothing for his brothers who crowd about him. What matters it to him what becomes of them? There is between him and them no bond of authority or dependence; no obligation of mutual aid and succor; every one must look to himself and settle matters with God. The golden thread of charity, that comes down from God and ought

to unite all men together, is snapped; there is no longer any use for it, and every one can haughtily say: "On this earth I am king of myself, I obey no man." Do not tell me that God in delegating His power to the Church, in placing her between Himself and men and obliging them, if they will come to Him, to come to Him through her, abdicates His supreme authority and exposes it to the whim of men. No, my friends, the supreme authority is always and entirely in and with Him; from Him alone comes the light of truth, the life of grace, the power to govern; from Him directly these come down upon Pontiff and bishops and priests, upon the teaching body, and through them are they diffused among the faithful. It is as the light of the sun, reflected from the planets and giving light to us; it is as the warmth of those immense ocean currents, determined by the sun, which, skirting along the shores of continents carry thither heat and life. It is fitting, it is necessary, in the present order of things that we should walk by faith, that we should not communicate directly with God, but solely through the medium of the Church, thus through obedience subduing and breaking our pride. When the course of this present life is run, when we shall see God face to face, then and only then shall we be loosed

from all dependence, and God will be all in all and in each singly, and our liberty will be perfect.

The Church, prepared by Christ, on this Pentecost day, came forth from the Cenacle and entered upon her saving work, or rather, continued and extended the saving work of Christ. In her right hand she held the Gospel and by word of mouth elucidated and completed its teaching; in her left hand she held the cross, and from it she caused to leap forth the seven-fold fountain of life, the seven sacraments, that waters and enriches the earth. How long will her work continue? How long will her voice be heard? How long will the life-giving stream of grace flow forth from her blessed hands? As long as there will be a child of Adam left upon the earth, and until the number of the elect shall be complete; as long, and Christ Himself says so, as time shall last. Christ came upon the earth, He gave as the price of our ransom His very self upon the Altar of the Cross. For whom did He pour out His blood? For all men. Were none excluded? Not a single one? Was there no limit of space? None. Was there no limit of time? None. He is the Saviour of all whom He created, and He is the Creator of all and of each, therefore is He the Saviour of all and of each, whether they live at the poles or in the torrid zone, on continents

or on the islands of the sea; whether they are the children of Sem, Cham, or Japhet, it matters not; all are called to the truth, all are called to life. Lifted up on the cross He, the Saviour, extended one hand to those who were before Him in time, and one hand to those who were to come after Him. For the former He made provision in the oral teaching of the primitive tradition, which became the common heritage of peoples and of the synagogue; for the latter He made provision in the Church, to which in the person of the apostles He said: *"Go, teach all nations."* After Christ the Church alone is the means by which the truth can be known and grace received. Christ acknowledges as His children only those whom the Church, His only spouse, begets to Him. In order, then, that all may possess a sure means of salvation it is necessary that the Church shall endure throughout all time, as long as there are men to be saved. Her mission must last as long as the human family lasts in order that the will of Christ, who wills the salvation of all men, be fulfilled. Were this not so, Christ would wish the end without supplying the necessary means; He would wish that all men should pass from the shores of time to the shores of eternity and yet He would destroy the vessel that should carry them across; He would wish that all should walk in the light, and yet He would

quench the sun in the firmament; He would wish that flowers and harvests should cover the earth, and yet He would refuse the heat of the sun and the refreshing rains of heaven. This would be absurd and unworthy of man, and what are we to say of the Man-God? It is therefore an unquestionable truth, a truth absolutely evident, that the Church of Christ shall never fail, that she shall endure even to the consummation of the world. The nature of things demands this; Christ has promised it, the Church will be more enduring than the Alps, more stable than the sun in the heavens. Storms will rage, the earth will reel, the strong will assail her with violence, with arms and deceit, but Christ will watch over her and all the efforts of the powers of hell shall not prevail against her. She will see at times the sails of the ship that bears her rent asunder, its masts broken and its sides shattered; she will see the waters of the raging sea open to swallow her and the jaws of the monsters that dwell in its depths hungry to devour the shipwrecked, but she will safely ride the angry waves, she will pass securely over open abysses and through the monsters of the deep and finally cast anchor in the port of heaven. The Church will see the last day of time; reason and faith demand it; and all past history attests it. Neither the hand of man nor the powers of hell shall ever overthrow the work

of Christ; His ship shall never perish amid the breakers of the ocean. But will the pirates who infest the seas ever be able to snatch from her the treasure of truth that she carries in her hold? Will the passengers that she carries, the pilot that guides her, the sailors that toil in her with hand and brain, overcome by fear or allured by hope, will they during the raging of the storm like craven cowards seek to lighten the battered vessel or dare to cast into the waves the sacred deposit committed to them? Will they ever dare to adulterate the most pure gold of truth, to mix with it a baser metal, to destroy or waste her life-giving food, her living waters of grace? No, never. To make shipwreck of the truth, of even one solitary truth, to change a single article of her divine code, to dry up one single spring of vivifying grace, would be to allow the vessel to sink and perish. If the Church should part with one single truth, if she should change in a single point the code of her morality, if she should alter a single sacrament, it would mean that she had separated herself from Christ, that she had been repudiated by Him, and that the office that had been committed to her, of teacher and sanctifier of men, had ceased. She must not only live always, but she must live as she is, a light set upon a candlestick, the faithful custodian of the sacred fire. The Church of Christ is not the Synagogue,

which, having run out the course allotted to it, composed itself in the grave. The Church is the spouse of Christ, the prolific and faithful spouse, who, when she shall have completed on earth the toilsome office of mother, will, all radiant with light and glory, follow her divine spouse to heaven.

For us, living on earth, my friends, the Church is Christ Himself. Without her there is neither truth, nor life, nor hope of salvation. Only through her can we go to Christ and through Christ to the Father. She can never cease to be; the torch of truth that she carries before us to light the way to heaven can never be quenched. Let us rest, then, as children upon our mother's bosom to be waked in heaven on that blessed dawn upon which the shadows of night shall never fall.

DISCOURSE IV

Pentecost and the Prophecies of Christ

MY DEAR friends, among the feasts of the Church, as you are well aware, that of today, the feast of Pentecost, or the fiftieth day after Easter, holds a conspicuous place. The Church is ever careful and anxious to celebrate it with the greatest possible pomp and to surround it with the stately splendor and sacred magnificence, the secret of which she so well knows. The Hebrew Pentecost commemorated the promulgation of the Law on Sinai, the Law of fear, written on stone for a people stiff-necked and uncircumcised of heart; the Christian Pentecost commemorates the divine Law, that was ratified on Calvary and proclaimed from the Cenacle, the New Law that was the complement of the Old, a law of love, written, not on tablets of stone but on the hearts of believers. To prepare us for this day the Church ordains a fast and she follows it with a solemn octave. In time past she directed that the mysteries should be solemnized for three days together and that all the faithful should approach the sacraments as at Easter. If a century back she reduced the three days' solemnity to two and if about seven centuries ago she abrogated the precept to receive the sacraments

of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist, this she did to accommodate herself to the changed conditions of the times and to show forth that wise spirit of discretion and consideration that has ever characterized her laws. And rightly does the Church celebrate this day with solemnity, I may say, quite equal to that with which she celebrates the feasts of Christmas and of the Resurrection, for if on Christmas she celebrates the birth, and on Easter the resurrection of her Founder, on Pentecost she commemorates the fruit of these two mysteries, her own origin and her auspicious and joyous entrance into the world. To-day, full of divine and immortal life, she comes forth from the Cenacle as fifty days ago Jesus Christ rose triumphant from the grave. To-day she went forth fearless into the streets of Jerusalem; to-day by the mouth of Peter and his brother apostles she spoke for the first time with a voice of authority and entered upon that terrible struggle, that most daring of all conquests, which was to be waged through all vicissitudes of fortune and to end only when time is no more. To-day Jesus Christ shoves out from shore the small and frail bark of the Church and launches it upon the tempestuous seas of a treacherous world; He sets up the Cross for its mast, spreads its sail to the breath of the Holy Spirit, and trusts the helm to the fisherman of Bethsaida, saying: "Fear not; I have over-

come the world; I am with you; steer out into the deep, ride the proud waves of the sea, and direct your course toward the peaceful shores of eternity."

The feast or mystery of Pentecost teaches us many and sublime lessons, but to-day I shall confine myself to two of them; first, I shall show that Christ not only looks away into the future, but that He rules and dominates it; and next, I shall explain the enigma of the atrocious war waged by the world against the Church. Both together make clear the divine wisdom of Christ and should be a comfort to us amid the bitter trials of life, which we must face and can not escape.

Jesus Christ spoke many prophecies and in the clearest terms; they will be found scattered up and down the Gospels; and not a single one of them has failed. They have all been exactly fulfilled precisely at the time and in the manner foretold. And among all the prophecies spoken by Christ I believe there is not one that was so frequently, so clearly, and so variously announced as that concerning the fortunes of His Church on earth, and it is on this subject that I propose to speak.

Open the four Gospels, search them through and through, and you will find that on every page of them Jesus Christ speaks of the fate that awaited His Church, His apostles, His disciples,

and those that believe in His name. What does He say? How does He describe the fortunes of His Church? How will His apostles and their successors be received by the world? How does He sketch the future story of His Church? Wonderful to say, He speaks of her with a clearness and a frankness that is awe-inspiring; one would almost say that He experienced a mysterious delight in depicting her future in the darkest colors, and whilst it should seem that He ought to have softened His language, considering the timid character of His apostles, He makes it more pointed and decisive; He suppresses nothing, He conceals nothing, He speaks out with unusually blunt frankness. Here are His words as they are scattered up and down the Gospels which I quote as they come to my memory: *"I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. They will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. You shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake. The brother shall deliver up a brother to death, and the father the son, and the children shall rise up against their parents and shall put them to death. You will be hated by all men for My name's sake. When they shall persecute you in this city flee into another. If they have called the good man of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household! Fear not them that kill the body*

and are not able to kill the soul. They will put you out of the Synagogue; yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth a service to God. If they have persecuted Me they will also persecute you.'' Do not fancy that this was a condition peculiar to the apostles at the first setting up of the Church. By no means; it has been more or less the condition of the Church from the beginning until now and will be to the end, for Jesus Christ has said expressly that His disciples would be treated as He, their Master, was treated and that His Church would live forever, and therefore will the conflict go on forever; and St. Paul, the faithful interpreter of Christ, tells us that all those who will live according to the teachings of the divine Master will suffer persecution and that to be a Christian is all one with being a target for contradictions; and if this is true as to individuals, how much more true is it in regard to the Church, under whose banner all the followers of Christ are gathered together!

My friends, can we doubt that these words fell from the lips of Christ before they were verified by the event? No; to doubt this is impossible. Could language be more explicit and precise? It is like a polished two-edged sword. Now let me ask: Was it, humanly speaking, possible that this prophecy, so explicit and so clear, so often repeated and so minute in detail, foretelling how the

apostles would be received and describing the fate awaiting the Church in the course of ages, could ever be verified? Was it, when Christ uttered it, what human wisdom would have forecast? I do not hesitate a moment to reply in the negative. Had Christ judged by the light of human reason and human knowledge He ought not, He could not, have made such a prophecy as that which you have just heard; nay, He should have said exactly the contrary.

To realize this let us place ourselves in the midst of the apostles by the side of Christ and examine the world of that day, the new doctrine taught by Him, and the nature, character, and disposition of the apostles.

In the upper classes, among writers and men of science, among artists and men of letters, among statesmen and men of wealth, all were indifferent, religiously sceptical, and epicureans. Some few of them, men of more noble and elevated feelings, professed either the proud teachings of the Stoics or the brilliant teachings of Plato. Paganism still lived among the multitude, not as a religion, which it never was, but as a cult, as a tradition, as a means to fill, if that were possible, the void of the heart, to satisfy the hazy yearning for the Infinite, and to justify conduct against which the conscience confusedly but necessarily protested.

In Rome that royal people saw with equanimity a temple built by Agrippa, sacred to all the gods of the earth; the very name *Pantheon* was itself a solemn profession of universal religious tolerance; in Athens the Areopagus paid honor to a crowd of deities, and among them to the Unknown God; and the Egyptians freely worshiped what divinities they liked, and so also did the Syrians and the Gauls. No law proscribed a single one of all the innumerable religions of the Roman Empire; not a single citizen was molested for worshiping his national deities. This was the wise policy of ancient Rome and was not the least among the causes that explained the wide extent of her empire and the respect and obedience she received from peoples the most numerous and diverse.

The Jewish nation did not escape this breath by which the religious sentiment was everywhere enfeebled and every worship tolerated. There sat in the Great Council of Jerusalem a large number of Sadducees, the epicureans of Israel, who denied the existence of spirit and of a future life, and the supreme authority did not raise a voice against them.

Such was the Roman world and the Greek, the Gentile world and the Hebrew, at the time of Christ. Religious toleration spread everywhere

and from the upper it filtered down into the lower classes.

Let us now examine the teachings, theoretical and moral, which Christ was introducing into the world. They did not reject, they completed those of Moses, and instead of being opposed by the Jews they ought to have been welcomed by them more than by any other people, as the flowering of Mosaic Judaism.

What shall we say of the Paganism of Greece and Rome? The teachings of Christ in reference to God and His nature and to the moral conduct of men should, among the upper classes, imbued with the philosophical principles of Socrates and Plato, of Aristotle and Zeno, principles admired and professed at Rome by Seneca and Cicero, by Marcus Aurelius and others, have received a most cordial welcome. Between the theoretical and practical teachings of Christ and those of the Platonic and Stoic philosophers there appears to be so close a resemblance and so striking an affinity that modern rationalism has dared, and still dares, to affirm that Christianity is but the result of the contact between philosophy and Hebraism, the natural issue of the scientific evolution of that age. And hence Christianity ought not to have encountered any serious opposition from the upper classes of society and from scientific men, and we all know that the uncultured and ignorant

multitudes in the long run follow their natural guides.

And finally if we consider the apostles and take into account their character, we shall be still further persuaded that their actions should at least have passed unnoticed, as the actions of a few poor, deluded fanatics. They were ignorant and uncouth, destitute of the world's goods, unprotected, without credit or prestige with the multitude; they were strangers, belonging to a race the most despised of all the nations of the East, and they lived on alms. They preached contempt of riches, honors, and pleasures; they required of their followers a love of humility and purity of heart, of temperance and self-denial, and a respect for and obedience to all authority for conscience sake; they imposed upon them in the name of God the duty of pardoning offences, of observing conjugal fidelity, of alms-giving, and of loving not only their countrymen, but all men without exception. How could such men, men who professed doctrines so holy, who did good to many and would have rejoiced to do good to all, be hated and persecuted? It was possible to compassionate them, as men who were deluded, but not to regard them as outside the law and to put them to death as at once the enemies of the State and of the human race.

Hence, in sending the apostles to preach and

found a Church Jesus Christ might have foretold that they would be harried and badgered, as is usual in the case of such men; that they would be neglected and scorned by the world; but humanly speaking He never could have foretold that both they and their successors would suffer persecutions as ferocious as those recorded in the Gospel. And yet this is just what He did foretell, not once only but often, and in terms so explicit that of all His prophecies none is more certain or more clear than this.

And what does history say? Who was right? To which do the facts she records give verdict, to the forecasts of human prudence or to the words of Christ, so diametrically contrary to these forecasts? The story of the Church begins on this very day and this is what it records. Scarcely had the apostles loosed their tongues and commenced to preach the Gospel of Christ when many of the crowd, and very likely among them the powerful and the learned, in accents of scorn and compassion cried out: "These men are drunk." Next they were dragged before tribunals, questioned, threatened, scourged with rods, thrust into prison, banished. Stephen, the fearless deacon, was buried under a very hail of stones; James had his head taken off; another James, James the Less, was cast down from the Temple; Peter and Andrew were crucified; Paul was beheaded, and

all the other apostles and disciples were exiled and imprisoned and sealed the Faith with their blood. The story of the apostles is the story of the Church; place, time, and customs may change the details, but substantially it is ever the same. There are ever powerful enemies in her path, who lay snares for her, make war on her and attempt either by sophisms or by the sword to take her life. Nor is it the rabble alone that rushes upon her; now princes strive to fetter her; again, it is the learned who calumniate and vilify her; again, it is enemies from without and, again, enemies from within; her life is indeed an uninterrupted struggle, a continuous warfare; she may be granted a truce but never a real and enduring peace. Go through the pages of history from the day of Pentecost until the present, and say if there has been in all that period a kingdom, an empire, or a republic, which has had on its hands enemies so numerous and formidable as the Church; and the strife, instead of moderating and diminishing, shows indications everywhere of becoming more acrimonious, and the future looks, as it opens up, still more portentous. Power is passing out of the hands of kings and monarchs and into the hands of the multitude, and new experiments in government are being daily tried; but the mistrust, the rancor, the hatred, or at least an unaccountable indifference toward the Church, which is treated as a

stranger and an enemy, continue. Science is day by day extending its conquests and becoming more the heritage of the people, but even science, which after all is a monopoly in the hands of a few audacious spirits, when evilly employed, furnishes the most formidable arms to the enemies of the Church and makes open war upon her.

Permit me to advert here to a remarkable fact. Many, very many Churches have existed and still exist upon the earth. There are many Churches that glory in the name of Christ, Churches that have been detached from the grand old trunk of the Catholic Church, in which alone Christianity is perfectly embodied. There is the Greek Photian Church, the Eutychian or Coptic, the Nestorian, the Russian, the Roumanian, the Bulgarian, the Servian, and all the Churches calling themselves Protestant, whatever may be their distinctive names; one and all are branches which have been lopped off from the Catholic Church because of heresy and schism. The Catholic Church holds in common with all these the bulk of revealed truth; she holds in common with them also the Decalogue. All these various Churches agree perfectly among themselves on one sole point, namely, in rejecting the supreme infallible authority of the Roman Pontiff, which is the center of our unity of faith and government. Now note, my friends, that all the Christian Churches,

separated from the Catholic, are left in peace, peoples and governments permit them to pursue their way in tranquillity. Who ever thinks of molesting or persecuting the Russian Church? Who ever thinks of embarrassing the Protestant Churches of England or Holland, of Switzerland or Germany? Who ever lays a heavy hand upon the Photian Church, the Nestorian, or the Eutychian? No one as far as I know; quite the contrary; they are protected, favored, and sometimes honored, even unduly honored by their governments. To this rule, generally speaking, the Catholic Church is the one sole exception. Everywhere and always she is mistreated, harassed, annoyed, more or less openly persecuted. The Catholic Church alone of all the Churches on earth has been and is the most fiercely pursued with every sort of weapon and warfare; this is her primacy and a glorious one it is, which no one can contest with her. Even in modern times, during that awful period of the French Revolution, was there a single Protestant Church that suffered? During the evil days of the Commune who thought of quarreling with the Protestant Churches or with Hebrew Synagogues? In the fierce war of the Kulturcamp were the Lutherans, the Calvinists, the Zwinglians molested? Not a year passes, and frequently not a month, that the heart-rending cry of our persecuted, imprisoned, and martyred

brethren, is not borne to us on the wings of the wind from north and south, from east and west, from Tonkin and Korea, from Annam and Cochin China and China proper, from the shores of the Congo and the upper Nile and from the Lakes of Central Africa. The poet well describes the Church as one that has for many centuries suffered and struggled and prayed to extend her sway from sea to sea.

The life of Jesus Christ was one unbroken series of humiliations and sorrows, and could the life of His spouse, of His mystical body, the Church, be other than His? Now I ask: How is it that the Church, which has not harmed and can not harm any one, which has done and is doing good to all, to the individual and to society, in the intellectual, moral, and physical order, has been and is ever so ferociously hated and persecuted? This is all one with asking, why was Christ, whose noble life was spent in loving all and in doing good to all, so hated, persecuted, and cruelly put to death? The cause must be sought not in the reason but in the passions; according to reason the Church should have been blessed and proclaimed the greatest benefactor of the human race; according to the passions she should have been cursed as its worst enemy, and if possible driven off the face of the earth.

The Church raises her voice and teaches all

men. And what does she teach? She teaches that there is a God, the Creator and Lord of all; that nothing, not even the most secret thought, escapes His all-seeing eye; that every man must render to Him a most strict account of every thought and affection, of every word and work. She teaches that the Son of God made Himself man, suffered and died for all, and that He Himself established the Church, the infallible teacher, the unerring guide, to point out the way to virtue and salvation. She teaches, finally, that the eternal law which God has written in our hearts, which the Gospel has made clear to us, has confirmed and raised to the highest perfection, must be observed. Such is the teaching of the Church. Can a teaching more sublime, plainer, and more holy be imagined? Can there be an institution more beneficial either to the individual or to the public at large than the Church whose teaching this is? Why, then, has the world, why have the powers of earth waged, why do they still wage, so vindictive a war against her? Because the world and the rulers of the world, according to the Gospel phrase, love not light but darkness.

O world, why should you concern yourself about the Church's dogmas or her moral laws, her Gospel or her Decalogue? You are free to do as you like; what matters it to you if the Church and her children believe in God, in Christ, and in

a life to come? If her faith seems to you a superstition, a useless and shameful yoke, why should you bother yourself about it, why should you on that account make war upon her? She does not forcibly thrust her faith and her laws upon any one; on the contrary, she proclaims openly that she detests physical force and advocates only persuasion.[1] Leave her, then, in peace; pay no attention to her; do not bring upon yourself the reproach of making war upon a society because it will not think as you do. You display the banner of freedom of thought equally for all; respect, then, this freedom in the Church. As long as you believe in complete toleration of every belief and opinion you can not hate the Church; neither should you put obstacles in her path and make her a target for your slanders and your enmity. If you do not love her, neither should you hate her. So should the world reason, if the powers of the world were faithful to the principles of which they boastfully proclaim themselves the apostles. But at bottom there is something in human nature more potent than its principles, more constraining than the laws it writes in its statute

[1] This is the formal teaching of the Catholic Church as set forth by the Fathers, such as St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, and others, and also by Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Immortale Dei Opus*, where quoting St. Augustine he writes: "No one is constrained to embrace the Faith. Catholics may if need be employ force *to defend* their faith, but never *to impose* it on others.

books, or the inscriptions it places on its banners; and this forces it, even in spite of the shame of contradicting itself, to belie those splendid professions. My friends, darkness will ever be the enemy of light, and life will ever be the enemy of death, and error in its own despite must oppose and make war upon truth. Why does the gorged wolf set upon the lamb and kill it; why does the sated tiger rush upon the gazelle that comes in its way? It is not hunger; it is instinct that impels both the one and the other to slaughter the defenceless. So also is it with the hatred of the world, with the malevolence of persons in power against the Church; it is all the child of instinct, it is born of the nature of things and acts despite reason, and will, and even self-interest.

I once knew a man of good natural parts, quick, acute, rich and influential in the community in which he lived. He had conceived a profound hatred against religion, and against priests and religious; the very sight of them put him in a rage. "What wrong," I said, "have those priests and religious done you that you can not bear the sight of them?" "They have," he answered, "done me no wrong." "Why, then, do you hate them? Why would you murder them, if you dared?" "I do not know," he replied, "but there is something here within me that compels me to hate them." And he spoke truly.

As in the physical and material world there are certain bodies that mysteriously attract each other, certain elements that have an affinity for each other, combining together to form one substance, and others that repel each other; so also in the moral order. Between the virtuous and the wicked there is often a mysterious and invincible repugnance amounting at times to violent hatred and developing into paroxysms of rage, which manifests itself in acts of ferocity that seem unaccountable. History is full of examples of this strange phenomenon and they are not rare even in domestic life. They are instinctive antipathies; men, before knowing each other, are conscious that they are enemies, I had almost said that they scent each other from afar.

Paganism with its superstitions and its foulness, Judaism with its false notions of the Messias and of His works, Pagan science with its pride and self-sufficiency, in a word, the world as it is portrayed in the Gospel, saw themselves face to face with the Church of Christ, with the truth and the virtues that made her venerable and beautiful; they felt a presentiment that in her dwelt a divine force that would subdue and utterly destroy them, and the instinct of self-preservation filled them with animosity and impelled them to arm themselves against this new enemy. The very sight, the presence, the name, the voice

of this Church, feeble if you will, but whose superiority they secretly acknowledged, was an affront to them, irritated the world and the powers of the world, provoked them to anger, and incited them to wage against the Church a most implacable war. This is the obvious reason and natural explanation of those persecutions which at first sight seem wholly inexplicable.

But this is not all. There is deep down in the heart of every man an ineradicable feeling of his own independence, which is easily confounded with an overweening self-love. If we search the depths of his soul we shall find there the *Ego,* that *I,* which is aroused, grows defiant and ferocious, when another bids him bow down and surrender at discretion. The *Ego* of the individual is transformed into the *Ego* of a school or of a party, of a moral body, and finally into the *Ego* of a nation or country. There is nothing more terrible than this *Ego* in which are embodied and personified the dignity, true or false, it matters not, the greatness, the glory, and the pride of a people. Woe to him who affronts it and stirs its wrath. When so affronted it is like a lion of the desert which the hunter attacks and wounds in its lair. The Church comports herself as Christ did; she stands forth feeble and lowly, but straightforward and resolute, fully conscious of her rights and of her duties. She does not soften

down the asperity of certain truths and duties, which are equally incumbent on subject and ruler; her speech is ever: "Aye, aye. Nay, nay." "Believe," she insists, "this Creed, observe this Decalogue; obey me as the representative of Christ, if you will be saved; if you refuse ye shall all equally be lost, whether ye be rich or poor, learned or ignorant, subjects or rulers. Before God all are equal, and the more exalted one is the more severe will he find his Judge." Fancy, if you can, my friends, what a reception Pagans, Hebrews, and philosophers, officials and consuls, governors, kings, and emperors, gave to such teaching as this and to those who announced it. Imagine how the pride of the wealthy and of the learned, of magistrates, kings, and emperors was wounded by such insolence, as they thought it, and how they fumed in their wrath. Fancy how, being possessed of supreme power, they must have used it against those miserable Galileans, against a Church that had the unheard-of audacity to inflict herself upon them, peremptorily to demand the homage of their minds and hearts, not for an interval but for all time, not of this class or of that, but of all classes, of the governed and of the governing. The conflict was inevitable and is so still; it has raged and still rages throughout the length and breadth of the world.

Scientific men and still more men in authority,

not only can not bring themselves to submit to be the disciples and subjects of others, even though they profess to obey the laws of God, but by a sort of instinct, by a sort of exigency of their nature, and as if by habit, they assume that all should bow down before them and obey their every wish. It is so sweet to rule, so flattering to our pride to see our brothers bow down before us and ourselves superior to them. Now fancy the Church in the presence of Pagan kings and emperors, and, later on, in the presence of Christian kings and emperors, in whom the Faith had not killed, nor could it kill, the evil root of pride, which is the heritage of us all, and you will easily understand how these men in possession of power felt that it was not only very desirable, but almost a necessity, to vanquish this Church, which spoke in the name of God, which proclaimed the sacred rights of conscience and which dared to say to them: "You may go so far; you may go to the threshold of conscience; but you must not and you can not go further. Here your empire ends, here mine begins."

One can readily understand how men in power, not alone Pagans, but Christians and Catholics also, in whom frequently Pagan ideas still lived, were inflamed with anger and flew to arms. All other religions yielding to fear, or from want of experience and lack of conviction, submitted to

lay authority, came to terms, and, either wholly or in part bartered their liberty and were content to serve, provided they were allowed to live. The Catholic Church alone replied: "I give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, but first of all I give to God what is God's. I obey in all things as long as the rights of God are not invaded, but where these are transgressed I can not, I will not, and I must not obey. You may scourge me, banish me, cast me into prison, load me with chains, drag me to the scaffold, but you will never get an answer from me different from this: I must obey God rather than men."

This is what constitutes the strength and the greatness of the Church and what stirs up against her the suspicions, the rage, and the implacable hatred of nearly all the powers of the world. This, too, is at bottom the true cause of all the conflicts between Church and State throughout the whole course of the Middle Ages, and which under varying forms continued from the Middle Ages until the French Revolution and have continued from the French Revolution down to our own day. In obedience to the precept of St. Peter and St. Paul the Catholic Church prayed for Nero; she prayed for all those in authority whether in the East or in the West; she acknowledged, and acknowledges the emperors of Germany and Russia even when she sees her

bishops, priests, and faithful children mutilated, imprisoned, and exiles wandering under a Siberian sky; but she has never surrendered and never will surrender one single iota of doctrine; she has never betrayed and never will betray one tittle of the truth committed to her by Christ. Such constancy and fortitude of mind should fill the world with wonder and admiration, but instead it only inflames its anger and impels it to make war.

All this Christ foresaw, all this He foretold, and it throws light upon the ever old and ever new story of His Church.

We salute thee, O Church of God, faithful mirror of thy founder and spouse, Jesus Christ; thou art truly a mark for unquenchable hatred—and unconquerable love.

In the persecutions, which are thy inseparable accompaniments, we see the fulfilment of the prophecy of Christ and the natural solution of this warfare which seems inexplicable between thee and the world. We gather under thy tents, we listen to thy words, we obey thy behests, for we are mindful that the divine Master said to thee: *"Behold I am with you even to the consummation of the world."*

DISCOURSE V

The Authority of the Church Comes from God and Leads Back to Him

JESUS CHRIST is, indeed, the sower in the parable of the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew, who went forth and sowed good seed. For three long years He had scattered His blessed seed with a lavish hand, and although some of it had fallen by the wayside, and some on the stony soil of the Scribes and Pharisees, and other some among thorns, or on the hearts of men who thought of nothing but of the riches and passing pleasures of this world, much of it fell upon the good and fertile ground of the apostles and disciples, who received it joyfully and with docile minds. But what more was required in order that the precious seed should take root and send forth shoots? Note, my friends, what happens in the natural order. The laborious husbandman commits to the earth the small grains in order that they may grow and multiply, each after its kind. But that they may grow and multiply is it enough for the farmer to scatter them in the soil he has patiently prepared? No; it is further necessary that at seasonable intervals the sun should warm and the rains water the earth that has received the seed. The same happened in the

case of the divine Sower, who sowed the seed in the chosen soil of the apostles and disciples. Jesus Christ, when He had sowed in them the heavenly seed, seemingly withdrew from them and waited until the vivifying fire and the invigorating rain of the Holy Spirit had warmed and made prolific that blessed soil, the fruit of which was to cover the whole earth. On the memorable day of Pentecost the sun rose and the mystical rain came down upon the earth that Jesus Christ had so lovingly cultivated and bathed with His sweat, and at once flowers and fruit came forth. As the divine Word had remained hidden for a time from the eyes of men in the virginal and blessed soil of Mary, and flowered and diffused His heavenly fragrance on the day when He was born, became visible and drew to Himself the first fruits of the faithful, so also His word remained for a long time, as I have said, buried in the productive soil of the apostles and only flowered and bore fruit under the rays of the Holy Spirit in the Cenacle. Jesus Christ during the days of His life on earth planted the tree of the Church; this tree began to bud and flower and bear fruit on Pentecost day. To-day we are called on joyfully to celebrate the birth-day of the Church. She is like the great day-star that mounts into the measureless fields of heaven, pours out upon the earth its light and heat, attracts to itself

the waters floating about in mist and vapor and, when condensed, gives them back again to the earth in refreshing showers. To-day the Church appears in the heavens pouring forth, like the sun, light and heat and life, but, unlike the sun, she will never set or suffer an eclipse. From her place on high she draws to herself minds and hearts willing to receive her light and drops down upon them the dews of heavenly grace, of which she is the dispenser. Let us attentively consider this Church on her first entrance into the world, for as she began so also will she continue to the end of time, because as her founder and everlasting spouse, Jesus Christ, never changes, so neither does she. How, then, does the Church, this mother of saints and image of the city of God, present herself before us on this her first day of life on earth?

She presents herself before us as personified in the apostles, who came forth from the Cenacle under the leadership of Peter; she presents herself before us as coming in God's name, as speaking, and teaching, and ruling by His authority; and those who with docility listen to her voice, who believe and obey without putting conditions, form part of her and become her members and her children.

In this first manifestation of the Church and of her organism there are two points that, beyond

all others, claim our special attention; namely, first, the power of the Church in no sense comes from men but from God, from God alone, and immediately from God; and next, only they belong to the Church of Christ, who in mind and heart, in faith and works are united with Peter and the apostles, and with the successors of Peter and of the apostles. These two truths, which I bring before you, are of the very highest importance, and more especially so in the age in which we live.

The inexcusable lack of precise knowledge, or worse, the subtle malice of some, or more probably a combination of both, has among a certain class of persons disfigured and disguised the idea of the Church, of her origin, and of the development of the authority she holds from Jesus Christ. This work of confusing and masking these truths, which is to-day more ardently pursued than ever before, and is being pressed to its ultimate consequences, is chiefly due to Protestantism, but it has received and still receives a powerful impulse from liberal political ideas, which naturally tend to invade or encroach upon the province of the Church, and to assimilate and confuse together the two powers, the civil and the ecclesiastical. A rapid historical survey is here both serviceable and necessary. Kindly listen attentively.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century the

founders of Protestantism openly maintained that Christ established in His Church the most perfect equality, that no one had any sort of power over others, that in consequence all were priests to themselves, and that every one could and ought to communicate directly with God without depending on any one whomsoever. There was no priesthood, neither Supreme Pontiff nor bishops, neither priests nor deacons; all the faithful were equal one to another, and were equally dependent on Christ, the only priest. Each one had his Bible; let him interpret it after his own fashion, believe and do what he found there, and take no heed of others. If the faithful wished for their greater convenience to select one from among themselves to exercise the sacred office of reading the Bible, of celebrating the Supper and discharging other hallowed rites, let them do so; but the one so selected had no sort of power over the others; his office was simply a mandate revocable at will by those who gave it. Among Protestants, then, there is no Church properly so called; each one is a Church unto himself, and the absolute democracy and equality established among them excludes any authority whatever as lodged in one or more over the other members. It was natural and inevitable that, if the Church of Christ was to be so conceived, and if there was no visible and sacred authority by which it was governed, there

remained only the civil authority, in which all power, including the religious, was lodged and concentrated, and so it happened. Where there is no priest the only remaining ruler is the civil prince, and religion becomes an adjunct of the State.[1]

It was seen that such teaching destroyed all authority in the Church and some attempted to modify it. Christ, these said, conferred upon the Church a real and supreme authority to enable it to govern itself as a society. But to whom did He give this supreme authority to teach, to confer sacraments, and to govern the Church? He gave it directly to the whole body of the faithful, to all believers, so that every one, by the fact of his being a Christian possessed it, but this authority is given to the faithful, singly and as a body, in such way, or on the understanding, that they are to hand it over to those to whom by their suffrages they shall choose to exercise it. Hence in this theory it is manifest that authority was conferred by God on the Christian people, singly and separately, and they were to delegate it to those whom they judged worthy of their confidence. Between the priesthood or the hierarchy

[1] This is the theory of Luther, Zwinglius, and Calvin, and of all the Protestants of Germany. According to this theory religious authority must necessarily end by passing into the hands of the civil or lay authority, which is the only authority that would then really exist in society.

and God stood the Christian people, the immediate and perpetual depositaries of ecclesiastical power.[1]

Finally there were those who said that Christ had founded His Church on the apostles, and on their successors, the bishops, and that to them collectively, or as a caste, He had given the power to teach and govern.

Hence all sacred power is lodged in the episcopal body and it is distributed through the Church, which, if I may so say, has received from Christ a form of government known as an aristocracy or an oligarchy.[2]

Now, the Catholic Church teaches and declares that Jesus Christ chose twelve apostles; that from among them He singled out Peter and gave to him and to his successors all power to teach, to govern, and to sanctify the Church; that the apostles and their successors, the bishops, receive their power from Christ through Peter and his successors, or that, if they receive it immediately from Christ, it is always necessarily subject to that of

[1] This is the teaching of Richer and is in substance the common teaching as to the origin of the civil power, applied to the Church. According to Richer there is no real difference as to origin between the *civil power* and the *ecclesiastical;* both come from God and both are lodged as in a fountain, in the will of the people.

[2] Such is the Anglican Church as by law established, and such also are the Photian, the Russian, the Nestorian, and the Eutychian, which are governed by bishops and patriarchs through synods.

Peter. We Catholics believe, then, that the power of the Church comes from Christ, that it is lodged and concentrated in His vicar, the Bishop of Rome; that from him and through him it descends to bishops and priests for the welfare of the whole Church. It would be a waste of time to show you that this teaching is clearly contained in Holy Writ, where Christ gives His power to Peter and to the apostles, but never to the people. In a word, the power of the Church is fashioned on that of the government of a family; in the family power is not lodged in the children, and does not rise through them to the father; by nature it is lodged in the father and from him descends to the children; and as the children can never take that power from the father, so the Catholic family can never take away, or limit, or in any way modify the power that Christ has conferred on His vicar, and which, through him, He communicates to or determines in the body of bishops.

To-day, as we have seen, the Church crosses the threshold of the Cenacle and establishes herself on the earth. Who are those who begin the work of Christ and set up His kingdom? They are the apostles, who are just entering upon the world; but at their head walks Peter; He first begins to speak and to preach Jesus Christ and by him is the first Church formed. Peter and the apostles

teach the people as, and when, and in the measure that seems to them reasonable; they baptize, they confirm, they gather the faithful about them, they rule them, they celebrate the sacred mysteries, they are the center and soul of the Church, that is forming and growing up around them day by day.

From whom did the apostles and their head, Peter, receive authority to do all this? From the Christian people? But they were not yet in existence, nor could they be. They were called into existence by the apostles. How could power be received from those who did not yet exist? It would be an effect producing a cause, a son giving life to his father.

Did Peter and the apostles receive this power from the Synagogue or the Sanhedrim? Both of these were most hostile; they had nailed the Master to the cross and they will soon cite the apostles before them, forbid them to preach, and have them publicly scourged.

Did Peter and the apostles receive their power from Herod or Pilate, who then ruled in Judea? Did they at least ask leave of them to found and govern the new society? Herod and Pilate held civil and political, not religious power; they had been the enemies of Jesus and so also were they necessarily the enemies of His apostles.

From whom, then, did Peter and the apostles

receive power to preach the Gospel and found the Church? From Jesus Christ. This they themselves affirmed before the Sanhedrim when it bade them be silent and preach no more in the name of Jesus: *"If it be just,"* they said, *"in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye."* [1]

In vain did the Sanhedrim renew its prohibition under threats; in vain did it have recourse to scourging, imprisonment, and the sword; in vain did Roman magistrates, consuls, and emperors bid them and their successors in the name of the law leave off preaching Christ; in vain did they try for three centuries to destroy the Church with fire and sword and to stifle her in her own blood; that first answer given by the apostles to the Great Council of Jerusalem became the cry of the Church and will continue so for all time. Her authority comes not from earth, it comes down from heaven; it comes immediately, perennially from Christ, the God-Man. Who, then, will dare stay this Church, or shackle her, or make her a maid-servant? What Cæsar or king, what legislative body or first magistrate of the republic, what cabinet of ministers or dictator would ever dare say to Christ, the Man-God: "We allow You to go thus far, but no further; this we forbid?" And is it not just the same to say this to the

[1] Acts iv. 15–21.

Church, His ambassador and representative on earth?

Reason tells us that the superior authority is above the inferior and judges it; to change this precedence would be to subvert all order and to introduce confusion into society. Now the authority of the Church does not come from the people, nor from any earthly authority no matter how exalted; it comes wholly and immediately from God and hence it can not be subjected to any earthly authority whatever; it is subject alone to Him from whom it is derived, that is, to God.

But, you will say, if this is true then the civil authority is subject to the Church, it is an appendage to the Church, and in reality there is only one supreme power, that of the Church.

Now, my friends, do we Catholics not say that the civil authority also comes from God as well as the ecclesiastical, and that in its own domain it is independent? Certainly, we Catholics affirm both the one and the other, and in doing so we do not think the statements are contradictory. Civil authority comes from God, and ecclesiastical authority comes from God; civil authority comes from God, who allows men to determine its forms according to the eternal laws of justice; the ecclesiastical comes from God, but its form God Himself has determined, and no one can ever change it. The civil authority comes from God,

and its purpose is to secure by just means good order, prosperity, and earthly happiness; the ecclesiastical authority comes from God, and its purpose is to carry men forward by a life of virtue and holiness here to the life that begins beyond the grave. Each is independent, wholly independent, of the other, in its respective field. It is false, then, to say that the civil authority is reduced to the condition of a satellite of the ecclesiastical and that the latter is supreme. The ecclesiastical, by reason of its supernatural and spiritual end, and of the means it employs, is the more noble of the two and the more necessary, and demands of the civil that it shall put no impediment in its way; on the contrary that it shall, as occasion and opportunity may arise, remove impediments from its path and aid it in attaining its end; and in turn the ecclesiastical authority engages to give to the civil the aid of its moral force, an aid of immense advantage whether as regards the private life of the individual or the public life of society. The two powers are, moreover, distinct, because the ends and the means of each are distinct; but they are not separate, and much less are they enemies, and the interest of each requires that they should go forward hand in hand and act in concert, of course according to the special conditions of time and place, respecting each other

and holding out to each other the hand of friendship.

But suppose these two wayfarers, the ecclesiastical authority and the civil, traveling along the same road, should antagonize each other and by reason of conflicting interests set to quarreling; what then?

They never should antagonize each other, since it is not possible that the true interests of time should ever conflict with those of eternity; and if they do antagonize each other this will be due to human infirmity, or to some misunderstanding, or to the passions that cloud the judgment. But if they do quarrel what is to be done? They should act as do two honest and upright travelers, who chance to be going along the same way and jostle and annoy each other. They talk the matter over, each explains his position, they search out the cause of the trouble, they set themselves to remedy it, come to an understanding, and set out again on their journey in peace. And this is what the two authorities have done and what they should always do whenever a misunderstanding arises between them, and both princes and people, both State and Church, will be the gainers.

But, it will be said, if an equitable settlement can not be had between Church and State, what

is to be done? Which of the two powers is to give way?

It is quite certain that if the point in dispute refers to things that do not touch faith or morals, or universal discipline, or any other substantial point, the Church for love of peace and for the common good will make every possible sacrifice; but if the question at issue involves faith, or morals, or general discipline, or anything else of supreme importance, the Church will never come to terms; she will remain immovable, and this all history attests.

Now let us put aside the case in which civil authority is supposed to be in the hands of men who are not Catholics, and consider the case in which power is in the hands of Catholics, who as such are subject to the authority of the Church. The Church solemnly affirms that the question at issue refers to faith, or morals, or the interest of souls, and that as to these no compromise is possible. Now may Catholic statesmen in such a case, as representing the rights of the people on the one hand, and on the other knowing their duty of respect and obedience to the Church, rise up against her, resist her commands, and spurn her authority? May they have a two-fold conscience, now professing themselves children of the Church and again parading as her enemies? May they as private individuals acknowledge her as a mo-

ther, and as representatives of the civil authority judge her, and if need be condemn her? No, never.

But, it is said again, the Church by the very fact that she is clothed with divine and infallible authority regards herself as superior to civil authority; she does not deal as peer with peer, she takes on the attitude of a judge from whom there is no appeal; in dealing with an authority like this there is nothing to do but simply either to submit, or to resist and fight. How would you have one deal with an authority that calls itself infallible?

The answer is easy and it has been partially given above. The Church will never appeal to her infallible authority except when there is question of faith, or morals, or universal discipline, and in these she can permit no discussion and to treat, when these are in question, with the civil authority as with her peer would be to prove false to herself. But apart from these questions she allows, welcomes, and at times invites discussion. She is always a mother and therefore superior to her children, but how can she be a mother without at times abdicating her dignity, treating with her children, and making compromises with them?

In bringing this first point to an end let us repeat that the Church, in the person of Peter and the apostles, received power to teach, govern,

and sanctify men; that this power is perpetual and universal within the limits fixed by the Gospel; that she receives it not from men, not from any earthly authority, but from Christ, to whom alone she is accountable; that this power, instead of being a detriment to the dignity of earthly powers, or in any way diminishing their strength, is an aid to them, makes them more respected among the people and more efficient for good; that where misunderstandings arise and the two powers seem at variance with each other, the Church does not decline to seek a way to adjust a reconciliation, if the subject under discussion permits it. Now, my friends, can any one honestly say that in all this there is anything unreasonable, anything that endangers the rights of the civil powers, or that can in any possible way be injurious to the interests, moral or material, of the people?

Your own good sense, which is often a safer guide than the most subtle, and not always unbiased, disquisitions of scientific men and especially of lawyers, will give you the answer.

In our day more than ever before the tendency is to bring down the supreme civil power from the upper to the lower classes. There was a time when it was lodged in the hands of one or of a few, and it was held by some that it came directly from God, and descended upon monarchs as the

tongues of fire descended upon the apostles in the Cenacle. Next, the supreme civil power, as centered in monarchs or in a few men, came as time went on to be shared by the aristocratic body, associated with monarchs; next, it was still further extended, and to-day it is diffused among the multitude, in whom it is lodged and by whom it is handed over to their representatives, whether for better or for worse, it is not necessary here to inquire. Just now there are signs to indicate that the supreme civil power is again passing from the lower to the upper classes, from the people to their representatives, and that it is gathering about thrones where thrones still exist. In this constant development of the civil power, which descends from God upon the multitude, from the multitude mounts up again to the throne and from the throne descends once more upon the multitude, now, the arbiter of its own destinies, it is only too easy for men to draw comparisons between the civil power, undergoing these constant changes, and the power of the Church, and to make the former in all its varying phases the model of the latter. The form of the power of the Church has been determined by its divine Author, Jesus Christ, and no profane hand may dare to alter it. Christ did not wish to abandon this to the will, to the caprice, or to the natural fickleness of men, and still less of the

mob. He concentrated it in a body chosen by Himself, in a Head appointed by Himself, and while this Head and that Body may, according to the conditions of time and place, and the reasonable desires of the people, relax or tighten the reins of the power they hold, they may never, now or in time to come, allow it to pass out of their hands; neither may they change its nature nor the line of its succession. Cast as we are in the midst of the whirlwind of human affairs, spectators of these incessant changes of kingdoms and empires, of dynasties and republics, of statutes, constitutions, and laws, we learn to appreciate the organism of the Church, which in all its essential parts is unchanged and unchangeable, and to it we shall cling as to a rock or strong tower, lest, buffeted by the treacherous waves of time we may be cast out upon the high sea and swallowed in its depths.

And now let us pass on to the second truth of which I promised to speak and which is a natural consequence of the one just treated.

All power in the Church comes immediately from Christ; she is the incarnation of this power, as the sacred humanity, personally assumed by Christ, was the incarnation of the Word. What follows from this? That there is no other way by which to go to Christ except the Church, the Church founded by Him and as He founded her.

To think of uniting oneself with Christ, and yet ignore the Church, that is, the hierarchy, is like attempting to cross a great river without going over a bridge or in a boat; or like wishing to see the sun, but not its rays; or to touch the soul without touching the body; or to enter into the sanctuary of a man's conscience without speaking to him by word or sign; or to get an electric shock without a conducting wire. Christ has given into the custody of the Church the treasure of His truth and grace. Would you share in this treasure? You must go to the Church who alone possesses it and dispenses it.

Say, my friends, that there is a powerful prince who governs a vast and flourishing empire. On a certain day he summons his ministers and tells them that he has made preparation to go into distant lands. "All power," he goes on, "is in your hands. I am now about to set out and I shall be for years a long way off and inaccessible to my subjects. I can not leave the empire to itself; that would be a crime. Therefore until my return I commit all power to you; use it as you judge best for the good of my people. All who obey and respect me, must obey and respect you, who hold my place."

Now, my friends, what would you say of such of the subjects of this prince as would refuse to recognize the authority of his lieutenants, and

who would say: "We respect and obey the prince, but we shall have nothing to do with his lieutenants, men whom we do not know; we shall give an account of ourselves and of our actions to the prince alone and to him we appeal?" You can easily fancy how they would fare during the incumbency of the lieutenants and what punishment they might look forward to at the return of the prince. In these unnatural rebels, who while recognizing the authority of their prince refuse to recognize that of his lieutenants appointed by himself, you have an exact counterpart of the conduct of those Christians who, while professing to respect and obey Christ the Saviour, refuse to respect and obey His Church.

I understand, my friends, the difficulty that rises in your minds. Subjects, you will say, can not go to a prince who is absent and can not be seen; and neither can a prince govern subjects who are leagues away and whom he does not even know; but with Christ it is different; He is God, He sees all, knows all, and is present everywhere. Why, then, may we not pass His lieutenants by and go straight to Him and deal with Him alone? What law forbids this? The law enacted by Christ Himself forbids this, in virtue of which we must listen to the Church as we would listen to Christ Himself, for he declared that whosoever hears the Church hears Him; that He would

ratify in heaven whatsoever the Church ratified on earth; that he would forgive those sins that the Church forgave and retain those that she retained; that whatsoever she bound on earth He would bind in heaven, and whatsoever she loosed on earth He would loose in heaven. All men, no matter who they may be or what their rank and power, must respect a law so solemnly sanctioned by Christ, for to violate it is to offend Him and to incur His wrath, and we all know what a frightful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.

And if we can not have recourse to the Church, if we can not listen to her teaching, or avail ourselves of the power of the keys for the remission of our sins, or receive the sacraments, the fountains of grace, what will become of us? If we can not have recourse to Christ shall we be cut off by Him?

No, my friends, when through no fault of ours we can not gain access to the bosom of the Church, the arms of the Father are ever open; when the Church can not receive us Jesus Christ will receive us, He who reads our minds and hears the sobbing of our heart, He who wills that none shall be lost.

Let it, then, be a settled and most certain truth for all that, as far as we are concerned, the only way to Christ is through the Church; we must

listen to the Church as we would listen to Christ, because, in the condition of things as they are, for us Christ lives in the Church, works through the Church, governs and sanctifies souls by the Church.

You will say, this is all very well, but in regard to what things must we listen to the Church? In regard to all things that she teaches in the name of Christ and in regard to all laws that she proclaims in His name.

But if some things should seem to us unreasonable and unjust, what then? Who are you that you should judge the Church and in judging her judge Christ Himself? There are two judges before you, your own reason and the reason of the Church, and therefore of Christ. To which of these two ought you to give the preference? It is clear you ought to give the preference to the reason of the Church and of Christ.

"But," you will say, "suppose the Church has not pronounced a formal judgment, has not defined a question, but limits herself to saying, 'you should hold this, or you should do that, or you should avoid that other,' am I then free to follow my own reason instead of that of the Church and of Christ?" No, my children, you are not. Suppose your father and mother should lay upon you a command in solemn and peremptory terms, what would you do? You say at

once: "We should obey without a moment's hesitation." May you be ever blessed, my children. Now, suppose your father and mother did not solemnly and peremptorily command you, but made their wish and desire perfectly clear to you, what would you do? You would say: "We are docile and loving children, and nothing is farther from us than the thought of saddening our parents; it is and ever will be a joy to us and a glory both to say and to do what we know our parents wish and desire." A noble and a holy reply. Let this be your rule of conduct toward your mother, the Church: *To think and feel with her.* When you know how the Church looks upon a doctrine, although she has not as yet passed upon it a judgment from which there is no appeal, bow your heads and hearts to what she holds: *This is to think with her* and with Christ.

On this very day Peter announced the Gospel of Christ to the throngs that gathered in Jerusalem. When they had heard these things they had compunction in their hearts and said: "What shall we do, brethren?" And Peter said: "Do penance and be baptized every one of you for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost." It was a command to these throngs and they forthwith obeyed.[1]

[1] Acts ii. 37 seq.

Later on there was a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews because the widows of the former were neglected in the daily ministrations, and to remove the cause of dissension the apostles proposed to the multitude to appoint deacons to serve the table. It was not a law; it was a suggestion, a wish of the apostles, and the multitude acquiesced, received the proposal with favor and chose the deacons.[1] The conduct of the first Christians towards Peter and the apostles is an exact pattern of what ours should be toward the Church, which is now, as then, the Church of Peter and the apostles.

The error of those Christians, inconsiderable in number, who hold in practice that they can be saved without being united in mind and heart, in faith and work with the Church, is not a new error, my friends; it has had advocates in every age, even in the golden age of the Church. St. Cyprian, who lived in the third century, when the memory of the apostles was still fresh and the echo of their voice still heard, wrote a work, small indeed in size, but of inestimable worth, in which, with an eloquence worthy of Demosthenes and Cicero, he smote the error of those of that day who maintained that they could serve God and be saved, even though separated from the Church.

[1] Acts vi. 1 seq.

Allow me to bring this discourse to an end by quoting some passages of it, translated into our tongue. "Does he who is not united with the Church believe that he holds the Faith? Has he who opposes and resists the Church, who deserts the chair of Peter, upon which the Church is founded, any assurance that he is in the Church? And this unity we bishops especially, who govern the Church, should firmly hold and defend, and thus show that the episcopacy is also one and undivided. There is but one head, one source, and one mother, blessed with many children. We are born of her womb, nourished with her milk, and animated with her spirit. The Church knows but one House, and she guards with chaste purity the sanctity of the marriage bed. She preserves us for God, and the children whom she begets she gives to God. Whosoever is detached from the Church is joined to an adultress and is cut off from the promises of the Church. Whosoever leaves the Church will not attain the promises of Christ. He is an alien, impious, and an enemy. Whosoever has not the Church for a mother, has not God for a Father. Whosoever gathers elsewhere than in the Church, lays waste the Church. Whosoever holds not the unity of the Church, holds not the law of God, neither has he the faith of the Father and of the Son, nor life and salvation. Do they think

they have Christ in their midst who are gathered together outside the Church? This stain would not be washed out with blood, even though they were martyred confessing Christ's name. He who is not in the Church can not be a martyr. Whosoever is separated from the Church is to be shunned. Can he who makes war on the priests of Christ and cuts himself from the society of the clergy and people fancy he is with Christ? He bears arms against the Church; he opposes the ordinance of God."[1]

[1] Hanc unitatem Ecclesiae qui non tenet, tenere se fidem credit? Qui Ecclesia renititur et resistit, qui cathedram Petri super quem fundata est Ecclesia, deserit in Ecclesia esse confidit? . . . Quam unitatem firmiter tenere et vindicare debemus, maxime episcopi, qui in Ecclesia praesidemus, ut episcopatum quoque ipsum unum atque indivisum probemus. . . . Unum caput est et origo una et una mater faecunditatis successibus copiosa. Illius foetu nascimur, illius lacte nutrimur, spiritu ejus animamur. . . . Unam Domun novit (Ecclesia), unius cubiculi sanctitatem castro pudore custodit. Haec nos Deo servat, haec filios regno quos generavit assignat. Quisquis ab Ecclesia segregatus adulterae iungitur, a promissis Ecclesia separatur. Nec perveniat ad Christi praemia, qui relinquit Ecclesiam Christi. Alienus est, profanus est, hostis est. Habere iam non potest Patrem Deum qui Ecclesiam non habet matrem. . . . Qui alibi praeter Ecclesiam colligit. Christi Ecclesiam spargit. Hanc unitatem qui non tenet, Dei legem non tenet; non tenet Patris et Filii fidem, vitam non tenet et salutem. . . . An secum esse Christum cum collecti fuerint opinantur, qui extra Christi Ecclesiam colliguntur? Tales etiamsi occisi in confessione nominis fuerint, macula ista nec sanguine abluitur. . . . Esse martyr non potest qui in Ecclesia non est. . . . Fugiendus quisquis fuerit ab Ecclesia separatus. An esse sibi cum Christo videtur qui adversus Sacerdotes Christi facit, qui se a Cleri eius et plebis societate secernit? Arma ille contra Ecclesiam portat, contra Dei dispositionem repugnat (St. Cyprian, De Unitate Ecclesiae, passim).

I will not multiply citations; it would be useless. I will only ask you, my friends, if the necessity of being with the Church, as a condition of being with Christ, could be enforced in language clearer, more energetic, and more eloquent? I leave the answer to you.

DISCOURSE VI

The Church the Most Perfect Teacher

WHAT is the primary and the most urgent need of man? It is the need of truth, whether in the natural or the supernatural order, as a necessary means to happiness, the supreme goal of all our desires. Have you ever heard any one say: "I do not care for truth; I do not seek it; I should not know what to do with it; I despise it"? Assuredly not. Man may in his heart hate it and despise it because it reproves him and is a check upon his passions, but there is a hidden power within him, against which it is useless to struggle, that forces him to cry out that he loves and seeks truth.

Is truth a flower or a fruit that is born spontaneously on this earth? Is it the production of man? No. If it were, man could at his good pleasure throttle and murder it, as unnatural mothers murder the fruit of their womb. Truth is indestructible and immortal. Whence does it come? It comes from Heaven as light comes from the sun; it is a most pure ray coming out uninterruptedly from Him who alone can say: "I am the light of the world, I am truth." But if man can not quench truth, it not being the work of his hands, he can obscure it; as the earth,

though not able to quench the sun, can obscure and darken its light with the dense vapors that it draws from its own bosom. So have men done in time past and so do they still. They plunged into the filth of their wicked passions, and they so completely clouded and darkened their intellects that they could not take a step forward in the path of life without stumbling and sinking deeper into the mire into which they had fallen. Then He, who is life itself and truth itself, came down into the midst of our darkness to light the lamp that was never to be quenched and to enlighten all men. For three long years He toiled, setting upon a mountain the great lamp which was to illuminate the entire earth. When all was in readiness the heavens were opened and a divine flame shone out from on high; suddenly it lighted the lamp set upon the mountain of sin, the Church of Christ, then restricted to the apostles and disciples; its soft, tranquil, pure light, like waves of ether, from that auspicious day diffused itself over the whole earth, encompassed all things, penetrated all things and filled them with supernatural and never-failing life. This is the mystery which to-day we are called upon to consider.

Let us put metaphor aside. We are commemorating that most auspicious day, the first of the Church upon this earth, when she set out on her march through the centuries and began to fulfil

the command of Christ: *"Go, teach all nations."* To-day she seated herself upon the chair of truth, that Christ Himself assigned to her, and which she will never relinquish as long as time lasts. To you, who are gathered about this chair of truth, allow me from among the many truths that come to my mind and that are associated with this mystery to select three for your consideration. The Church has in herself all the characteristics that constitute a perfect teacher: First, she has the authority of a teacher; second, she possesses all the knowledge of a teacher; third, she knows the divine art of teaching. This is a large subject and hence I shall be obliged to abridge and condense my remarks and you will in consequence be under the necessity of giving closer attention.

The first requisite in any teacher, no matter what branch of knowledge he is called upon to teach, is, as you will agree, authority. A teacher supposes disciples who gather about him and drink in his words, and by the very fact of doing so they acknowledge his superiority and their need of him. He comes before them as one possessing a treasure, which he is ready and willing to share with those who ask it. Before they crowd about him and listen to him they must be persuaded that he is superior to them, that he has what they have not, and that he is disposed to

give them what he has. No one will recognize as a teacher another whom he regards as his equal or inferior. What can he gain from such a one? Nothing.

Say that we are in a schoolroom and that a young lad takes the teacher's chair and sets himself to lecture and teach. His companions begin to laugh, to banter, and to hiss him, and if they listen to him at all they do so to make game of him. And why so? Because they do not recognize in him either the dignity or the authority of a teacher.

But now the teacher comes in and takes his seat; at once there is silence; all eyes are fixed on him and the pupils listen to him respectfully and with attention. Whence the difference? They did not recognize any authority in the lad who took on the airs of a teacher, but they recognize it in him who really possesses it; and they willingly accept on his word what they do not understand, in the hope that they will understand it some day. In short, the teacher is as a father, who offers to them truth, the life of the intellect; the pupils are children, who long for it and ask it; if the pupils do not esteem and reverence the teacher, or if the teacher does not know how to make them reverence and esteem him, every tie between them is broken, and the teacher ceases to be a teacher, and the pupils

cease to be pupils. Authority alone creates both teacher and pupils, but it must be an authority that comes not of force, but of persuasion, an authority that is fatherly, that finds a way to the heart in order to gain entrance to the mind.

Now, my friends, in the Church, the great teacher, have we this characteristic of authority? It was said of Christ that He taught not after the manner of the Scribes and Pharisees, but *as one having authority.* Can we say the same of the Church? Let us see.

It is hardly necessary to say that the only supreme and absolute authority that has a right to inflict itself upon all men without exception is the authority of God. He is the creator and conservator, He is infinite wisdom and may say to all intelligences whether in heaven or on earth: "You are the work of My hands; all that you have or can have comes from Me alone. Bow your heads before Me and receive with docility what I say to you." Any intelligent being, who would dare doubt the sovereign authority of God over him, could only be regarded as having lost the use of his reason, and to argue with such a one would be useless.

Now Jesus Christ, the Man-God, the creator, conservator, and redeemer of the human race, He who is infinite wisdom, has transferred to the Church His supreme and absolute authority; this

He has Himself said in the clearest possible terms. The Church, then, comes before men in the name of God, of Jesus Christ, the Man-God, invested with all His authority and has a right to say: "Jesus Christ sends me to you; I am but the bearer and repeater of His words; to the deposit of truth and the treasures of grace that I have received from Him I have not added an iota nor have I taken from them an iota; as the divine Father was in Him and sent Him on earth, so He, Jesus Christ, is in me, and sends me to you; whoso hears me, hears Him, whoso hears me not, hears not Him."

O Church, or Ambassador of Christ, how do you prove that you have a mission and that the power you hold and exercise is divine? "Here are my credentials, here are the proofs that bear witness that my authority comes from Christ. They are the very works of Christ Himself which I continue; my very existence, the prophecies that are fulfilled in me; the miracles that are wrought by my children; the supernatural virtues that are resplendent in my bosom. Examine them well, scrutinize them in the light of science, and it will be found that God is with me, that my doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me, Jesus Christ's, the Man-God's. Who of you will refuse to bow before God? Very well, then; to bow before me, to receive me, is to bow before God and to receive

Him." Such is the language that the Church holds, and holds by right among men. Is there any authority superior to, or equal to, that of the Church? It is an authority not of earth but of heaven; it is one and the same with Christ's, as the light that flames out in the sun and is reflected in the stars is one and the same. Man in the presence of God feels in his soul that he is subject to Him, prostrates himself before Him, adores Him and cries out: "O Lord, Thou hast spoken; it is enough; Thy word is the law of my mind; I believe."

No man on earth and no combination of men would dare say: "I speak to you in the name of God, my word is the word of God; receive it and hold it as you would the word of God Himself." And should any man dare say so, or permit another to say so in his name, he would but excite in his hearers laughter, compassion, and scorn. Only the Church has ever held and holds such language; she preaches it from the housetops and makes it the basis of her teaching. Take from the Church this supernatural authority, in the name of which she fulfils her office of teacher, and you have destroyed her; you have lowered her to the level of any mere human authority; you have made her a mere arguer and disputer against any trifler who has a turn for controversy and knows not how to reason; you

have reduced her to the miserable condition of a vulgar pedant who with difficulty gathers about him a dozen pupils, always ready to dispute with him as equal with equal, to turn their backs upon him, to oppose doctrine to doctrine, and school to school; and they are right in doing so, for his authority is not greater than theirs.

In the beginning of the last century a great statesman sent through another this message to the greatest of captains, then almost the arbiter of Europe: "If you will cut yourself loose from the Church of Rome and form of your own empire a national church, of which you yourself will be the head, I promise you peace." "Tell him who sent you," replied the great captain, "that my people are not Arabs; Mohammed claimed to be a prophet of God, was the founder of a new religion, and was believed; but should I seriously proclaim myself the head of a Church, my subjects would laugh me to scorn." And he uttered a stupendous truth, thus proving himself to be a profound reasoner and as acute a judge of human nature as he was incomparably skilled in the art of war. The Church says openly and before all the world what neither sage nor monarch, no matter how powerful, has ever dared affirm in the light of day: "I represent," she says, "God on earth; I hold my doctrine from God alone, and it is your duty to receive it from me as you would

receive it from God Himself. Be silent, ye men; away with your reasonings; God speaks in me and through me; would you argue with Him?"

From this divine authority, which the Church is conscious that she possesses, comes the intimate and irremovable conviction of her infallibility in whatever relates to faith and morals; and her firm and inflexible utterances, dignified and majestic, extort the respect and subdue the intellects of men. Like to the divine Founder, when she deals with truths to be believed and commands to be observed, she does not hesitate; she does not waver between this doctrine and that; her language like that of Jesus Christ is: "Aye, aye. No, no." It is clean cut, precise, like to a shining, sharp, two-edged sword. There is not one word too few, not one word too many; she is ever the same; she goes straight to the point; she satisfies the minds of the learned; she gives assurance to plain men and to children; she dissipates every shadow of doubt. Having pronounced sentence, she never retracts it, never amplifies or restricts it, never adjusts it to suit the exigencies or the wishes of the rich, the wise and the powerful, or the fickle caprices of the multitude. Her word is as fixed as the masses of granite in the Alps and her people know that centuries may come and go, but that she will never change a single iota. This unshaken persuasion,

sealed by the history of her whole existence, impresses upon the language of the Church a character of security and of superhuman authority that breaks down all opposition and infuses into the mind a tranquil trust, which must be experienced to be known and appreciated. Our mind reposes upon the infallible authority of the Church with the same calm, unalterable certainty, with which learned men repose upon the axioms that constitute the groundwork of their sciences. There is, however, this difference; namely, the absolute certainty and security which scientific men derive from the indemonstrable axioms that are luminous to their minds is human and necessarily restricted to a privileged class, to the aristocracy of intellect, while ours is common indiscriminately to all who wish to possess it, and costs neither application nor toil. It is enough to say: "Thou, O Church, my mother, thou dost teach it; thou canst not err, for God is ever with thee. I believe."

From this firm conviction of her own authority the Church derives another most important advantage, which lifts her teaching above every other teaching. Her teaching tends directly to supply a power and a natural need common to all men, collectively and individually, namely, the power and the need every one has of believing. True, the power and the need of reasoning is

common to all men; but a little reflection will show that the power and the need of believing is still more common and more imperative. Reasoning is the privilege of the cultured classes rather than of the multitude; believing belongs to the multitude rather than to the cultured classes. The Church, because her authority is divine, avoids disputes and discussions and demands faith, an absolute faith, thus putting all men on a level, and without distinction subjecting all to God. Enter any of our churches and notice the multitude that fills them. Mingled together are artisans and laboring men, women, and children, and among them a few men of wealth and splendid education. Does the Church make any distinction between one class and another? All sit on the same benches, all hear the same teaching, and all, if they will be her children, must recite the same Creed: "I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth," down to the very last words, "I believe in life everlasting."

Far be it from me to disparage the power of human reason, the noblest gift of God, whose rights the Church, not only religiously respects, but defends and maintains; still every one who knows human nature and is familiar with the history of nations and peoples, knows also that faith, whether natural or supernatural, is the most

powerful means by which to move the heart and the conscience and that it is the great binding force of nations. Reason may make a conquest of the individual, but faith stirs whole nations and leads them whither it will. All the great phenomena of the human family, all the transformations of peoples, have been due to faith, rather than to reason. Reason is a force that loosens the first pebble on the mountain-side, but it is the snow that moves it, that accumulates around it until it becomes an avalanche sweeping before it everything in its course. Reason begins, if you will; it is the first small spark, but faith fans it into a devouring flame.

Here, say, is an immense army drawn up in array; it is silent and motionless; the voice of the commander is heard; the trumpeter answers back, and that mass of soldiers, as if they were one man, begins to stir; they move and march and rush forward headlong. All this is due to the voice of the commander and to the discipline of obedience, that is, to the voice of authority and to the strong faith that obeys. Could you by long and subtle reasoning have made the multitude move and march in that compact and orderly fashion? It would be folly to attempt it.

The Church, then, is the most perfect of the teachers of men because she has all the authority of the great Teacher, a divine authority, before

which all men must bow, which never changes, which fills the intellect with the most absolute certainty, which makes all equal, and which marvelously unites all minds that surrender themselves to her in one common faith.

Authority is required in a teacher, but this is not enough; knowledge or doctrine is also required. If the teacher has not knowledge what can he teach?

In the Church there is coupled with a divine and supreme authority a corresponding knowledge.

All things that can be taught and all sciences may be divided into two great categories; namely, into natural and supernatural sciences, into human and divine sciences. It would be useless to enumerate the natural and human sciences; you have heard the names of enough of them to fill many pages. Sciences are as numerous as the things on earth and in heaven, as the elements that compose them, and as their relations one to another; for science is only the knowledge of things and their relations.

Still more extensive is the category of the supernatural and divine sciences; it embraces all the sciences that lead to a knowledge of man, of his origin and end, of his duties to himself, to his neighbors and to God; it embraces the knowledge of what God has created, of what He has im-

posed upon man, and of what He exacts from him. The field of the divine sciences is immense.

Beautiful, noble, and admirable are the natural and human sciences, and all honor to those who cultivate them. They are all rays of the Eternal Truth, God, but they are not all necessary to man; some are beneficial, others are not more than a pleasure or a distinction.

But a knowledge at least of the principles of the supernatural and divine sciences is most necessary to all men. It is not, indeed, necessary that all men shall be learned, but it is necessary that all men shall be virtuous and shall possess the knowledge requisite to become virtuous.

"To me," said a profound philosopher, "it matters little to know whether the earth moves around the sun or the sun around the earth; but it matters a great deal to me to know if there is a God, if the soul is immortal, and what I am to do to avoid sin and to be eternally happy."

Now who can and should teach us the knowledge of supernatural and divine things? The Church, and the Church alone. While it is true that she, through her priesthood, has in all ages and countries held a distinguished place in the cultivation of the natural and human sciences and that at times she could proudly boast of having a primacy of honor in this field, nevertheless it is also true that this is not the field assigned her

by Jesus Christ. The scope of her office is not to teach the sciences of the first category, but of the second, to teach the supernatural and divine sciences that lead men on to virtue and sanctity.

The Church comes confidently before the world, laden with a wealth of every science that relates to God, to man, and to virtue. "Let all men know," she says, "that there is a God, that He is a most perfect being, a pure spirit; that He does not derive His origin from others; that He is or exists of Himself; that He is the first and the everlasting; that He is because He is; that He is immense, independent, infinite, unchangeable; that in Him there is nothing in potency, passing from potency to act, but that He is always and wholly one most pure act. In Him there is a Principle without a principle, that eternally generates of itself a most pure and infinite thought, in which He knows all things by one sole and most pure act. The Principle that generates without a principle is the Person, named the Father; and the thought generated, equal also to the Generator, is the Person, named the Son; and these two, the Generator and the Generated, knowing one another, love one another eternally and infinitely, and loving one another produce that ineffable Bond, a Person equal to them, named the Holy Ghost, that infinitely binds them

and fuses them in one sole Being, God, who, one in Being and trine in Persons, most perfect in Himself, needs not seek outside Himself an object either of His knowledge or of His love. God, all-blessed in Himself, but wishing and loving to communicate His perfections outside Himself, creates out of nothing all things in heaven and on earth, rules and governs them and leads them on by His providence to their perfection. Man is the work of His omnipotent hand and constituted by Him the lord and king of the earth. Mortal in his body, man is immortal in his soul, free, subject to the laws appointed by God, the Creator, and responsible for his acts. Created in justice and holiness, he fell by his own fault and was by his loving Creator again lifted up through a prodigy of love, the Incarnation. "O man," the Church goes on, "fear, respect, obey, and love God, and after God, respect, obey, and love your parents; do not affront your brother men; love them as you love yourselves; aid them according to your means; love your enemies; do good to them and pray for them; detest lying, and touch not another's goods; be humble, chaste, temperate, modest, generous; in a word be like your Father in heaven to whom some day you must give an account of every word and thought and act. If you are found like Him, you will be, body and soul, everlastingly and perfectly happy

with Him; if you are found unlike Him and gravely guilty, you will be separated from Him and punished according to your deserts."

Now, my friends, tell me frankly, can there be teaching more conformable to reason than this and more worthy of man? Can any teaching be imagined more complete, more simple, and more beneficial to men and to society? Is it not true that if this teaching were faithfully practised this earth would be soon transformed into a place of delights and man would soon enjoy such happiness as is possible here below?

The Church, then, fully possesses all truth and knowledge, natural and supernatural, by which this life is made a preparation for the life to come. But who can avail themselves of this treasure? All men without exception; and if her voice does not reach all, the fault, certainly, is not to be imputed to her, but to men themselves, or to obstacles which it is not in her power to remove. For her, boundaries do not exist; she is not limited by rivers or mountains, by oceans, deserts, or climate; her voice, like that of the apostles, is heard from end to end of the earth. Frequently national antipathy between people and people raises an insurmountable barrier against her; jealousy and envy intervene to prevent both from possessing the same faith; what one welcomes the other rejects, simply because

hatred of the one against the other is more potent than any other motive. The Church is above all such rivalries, which, if they were not so disastrous, would be puerile. She extends the same invitation to all, she gathers all equally about her, she feeds all with the same food of truth, she guides all along the path of virtue, she takes all to her bosom as her children, she has a preference for none, unless it be the miserable and the outcast, in this imitating her Founder, who said: "I am come to preach the Gospel to the poor."

And how long will this school of the Church last? As long as the human family lasts, throughout all time. She prescribes no limits of time or space to her teaching; no differences of peoples, kingdoms, or empires, of age or condition. Her temples rise in every quarter of the globe, and their portals are never closed; all may enter without asking leave of any one; every Sunday and festival, and oftener, a priest ascends the pulpit and distributes the bread of knowledge; he teaches all who God is; he teaches them who and what man is, and what are his duties, and how he may become virtuous. And if men will not go to her, she goes to them; she pursues them to their places of business and to their workshops, she penetrates into the bosom of the family, she makes her way into the schoolroom, she sits at the bed-

side of the sick, she takes up her abode in hospitals and asylums, in every place where there is sorrow or suffering; she calls into being and skilfully trains bands of apostles and Sisters, sends them into every corner of the earth, puts into their hands the catechism, the book of books and the code of codes; when any of those apostles, or of those heroic Sisters of Charity, falls on the field, or worn out with toil and infirmity is forced to give up the work, others gladly take their place and the school goes on. Driven from one country they turn their steps toward another and patiently wait, with the patience of God, for the moment when they may return whence they have been banished.

Ye philosophers and legislators, apostles of civilization and progress, when or where, have you done or even attempted to do anything like this? Show us what you have created, what schools of morality you have founded, what peoples you have rescued from barbarism, and taught the arts of true civilization. Your greatest philosophers have told us that it is stupid to think of making education universal and common to all; that the science of divine things is the privilege of the few; that plebeians should be abandoned to themselves; thus making a knowledge of the most obvious truths, truths necessary to every man, a disgraceful monopoly. Your teachings, great and

marvelous if you will, in human knowledge and in the sciences, have been, and are, and will ever be, uncertain, vague, contradictory, destitute of authority, impotent for good in the reformation of morals or in the acquisition of true virtue. The Church and the Church alone holds this divine science, she offers it to all [1] in the name of

[1] It seems fitting and necessary that I should here explain myself a little more fully lest any one accuse me of exaggerating.

When I affirm that the Church alone established by Christ possesses the authority and knowledge necessary to teach the truths without which no one can be virtuous, some one may object and say that outside the Catholic Church this mission is also discharged, as, for example, in the Protestant churches, in the various Greek churches, and in a measure also in other religions not Christian, such as the Brahmin, the Buddhist, and even the Mussulman. Even in these churches and religions many truths are taught, in some more and in some less, which are capable of making man at least in a measure both good and virtuous. Who denies it? But, then, note well that these truths are common to our Church; that in these churches and religions they are imposed, not in the name of man, but in the name of God, whether well or ill known, matters not. Protestants and schismatics in teaching what is true and good teach it in the name of God and of Jesus Christ, holding in their hand the Gospel, as if they were the rightful heirs of the apostles and represented Jesus Christ.

The Brahmin, Buddhist, and Mussulman religions contain truths both theoretical and practical, and these they teach in God's name and demand that they be observed. It is not surprising, then, that in the measure of the truths they teach and enforce so also will be the results. It would be amazing if it were not so. In short, the Catholic Church, because of her authority, her teaching, and her method of announcing it, is the perfect teacher of man and as such she is the only true Church established by Jesus Christ; all other Christian churches separated from us, and also the false religions named above, secure good, at times excellent, moral results, but in the measure in which they hold true dogmatic and moral principles, and therefore in the measure in which they possess in common with us

Christ, from whom she received it and learned it, and she distributes it to each, as a mother distributes bread to her children, according to their age and needs.

But this is not all. It is not only necessary that a teacher should possess *authority* and the *requisite knowledge;* if he would satisfactorily discharge his office he must have other qualities without which his work will be profitless. These qualities are numerous, such as simplicity of speech, patience, disinterestedness, and so on; but they may all be reduced in substance to one, which embraces all the others, namely, to love,—an ardent, constant love, a love that is the same to all, a generous love, a love that can come only from Him who is love itself.

The Church ever keeps her eyes fixed on her Head and Spouse, Jesus Christ; she knows that it was love that impelled Him to become man, to suffer nameless sorrows and humiliations, to teach the apostles and the multitudes, to seek the

certain truths and with us recognize a supreme authority to which they profess to be subject.

From this it is clear that a church, even a schismatical and heretical church, and a religion, even though it be false, has always a very great advantage over skepticism, rationalism, and materialism, the pests of society to-day; the former always recognize a principle superior to man, a divine moral source and some sort of sanction, whereas the latter deny everything and necessarily reduce morality to a human compact or creation, absolutely valueless and inefficacious, and of which any one may, when or as he will, rid himself.

lost sheep and carry it back to the fold, to sit at meat with sinners and lovingly to receive the penitent Magdalen, to make Himself the pattern of shepherds and to give His life for His sheep. Taught by such a model she necessarily has all the qualities of a most perfect teacher. She loves souls and must love them and desire their salvation, just as Jesus did, and therefore she must be, as He was, patient in teaching. If there is an office that demands tireless patience it is certainly that of instructing poor people and their children, and every condition of persons, in those truths which, too subtle for the senses, are with difficulty apprehended by the intellect, and which, making war on the passions, meet at the threshold of the heart a formidable enemy barring the way. How patient one must be in calling and inviting those crowds, often sunk in ignorance and having neither taste nor relish for the bread of truth, and in waiting at the foot of the altar to instruct them. But the ministers of the Church are ever ready in the pulpit, at the altar, in the tribunal of Penance, in the schoolroom, in prisons, and wherever they can reach them, teaching them and repeating over and over to them the truths of the Gospel, making themselves children with the children, learned with the learned, and all things to all to gain all to Christ. They are ever ready by day and by night, in public or in private to

teach both young and old. Their patience is limitless and untiring; when coldly received they are not affronted, when repulsed they are silent and bide their time. It is to this unalterable, indomitable patience in teaching that the Church is indebted for her victories and her triumphs from the days of the apostles to our own. A great bishop described in an expressive phrase this patience of the Church in instructing: "Priests," he says, "be fathers, aye be mothers, to those souls whom God has committed to you."

Another quality, which the Church learned from Christ and which has made her a perfect teacher, is simplicity of method and language. That which in the Gospel fills us with amazement, and which we seek in vain in all books written by hand of man, is its elevation of doctrine combined with unapproachable clearness and simplicity of language. Truths the most sublime, deepest mysteries and divine precepts of a divine morality are marshaled under our eyes with an order, a lucidity, and a simplicity that will ever be the admiration and the despair of the learned. There is not a word too few, not a word too many, the arrangement is perfect, and everything is so clear that it never occurs to any one to demand reasons and proofs. To read it is to understand it and to listen to its proofs. Its sentences are like axioms, the very statement

of which carries conviction. This art, which is luminous in the Gospels and which distinguishes them from all the writings of the greatest philosophers, has passed into the Church. She takes the catechism and she teaches children and adults, the ignorant and the learned, all truths relating to God, His nature, and His origin, truths relating to the end of all things, truths that concern moral conduct and the life to come; and there is not a child, a laborer, or an artisan, no matter how deficient in intelligence, who can not understand as much as is necessary for him to know. The greatest theologians of the Church in all ages, following the example of Jesus Christ, have gladly come down to the condition of children and the poor in order to teach them catechism. When I see Bossuet and Fenelon, Bellarmine and other lights of the Church teaching catechism to children in their cathedrals; when I see Augustine explaining the deepest mysteries of faith to the fishermen of Hippo; and Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nyssa writing those abridgments of doctrine that have come down to us through centuries, I am filled with amazement at such simplicity and depth of learning and I cry out in spite of myself: "O Church, thou art a real and a perfect teacher. Thou art indeed the heir and continuator of Him, who is the one only teacher and who said: 'I am sent to teach the poor.' "

Finally we should not lose sight of another quality conspicuous in the teaching of the Church. On a certain occasion Jesus Christ said to His apostles: "*Freely have you received, freely give.* You have received My teaching gratuitously and without price; very well, then, give it gratuitously and without price." The cry in our day is: "Instruction to all, *gratuitous* and *obligatory.*" Nineteen centuries ago the Church solemnly proclaimed the great principle: "Religious and moral teaching *for all and without price.*" Her temples and oratories are ever open to all who wish to enter in; there is no distinction of age, sex, or condition; nothing is charged for the instruction that is constantly given. Has a fee, even the smallest, ever been asked of those who pass the threshold of the Church? We faithfully observe the precept of Christ: "Freely have you received, freely give."

But the men of this age will not only have instruction *gratuitous;* it must also be *obligatory;* and they inflict punishments and fines on those who do not observe the law. The Church is more benignant and liberal than they. She offers gratuitously a knowledge of human and divine things, but the obligation to receive it is only moral, binding in conscience and before God; she constrains no one to receive her teaching. As she abhors and detests the use of material force in

obliging any one to embrace her faith, so she will not compel any one either to hear or accept her teaching.[1] All this, she says, must be the work not of material coercion, but of persuasion, as becomes the nature of man.

You will agree with me, my friends, that in the Catholic Church are found together in their highest perfection, all the qualities to teach the people, namely, the *highest authority,* the most *complete knowledge,* and that *love* which suffers all, which makes all intelligible, and which gives without asking a return. Let us gather at the feet of this teacher, who continues and fulfils the work of Christ; let us listen to her reverently, obey her, and love her.

[1] I am perfectly well aware that in certain times and in certain places and by certain men force was sometimes employed to constrain others to hear and receive the Catholic doctrine, as at times force was employed to impose faith and Baptism. But let us not confound the work of some poorly instructed individuals with the work of the Catholic Church. She has never constrained and never will constrain a single man to embrace the Faith, or to receive instruction.

DISCOURSE VII

The Church's Two-Fold Apostolate of Charity

On this Pentecost day, the fiftieth after the Pasch of the resurrection, a day made rich in blessings by the blood of Christ, amid the fires of the Holy Spirit in the Cenacle of Jerusalem the Church was born and drew the first potent breath of that divine life, which she was to diffuse over the whole face of the earth and which no created power would ever be able to quench.

The Father before all time of Himself begot His eternal Son, His own consubstantial image; the Father and the Son by one eternal act breathed forth one eternal love, the Holy Spirit. The infinite fecundity of the Father was manifest in the Son, and through and by the Son it was completed in the Holy Spirit, the ultimate term of the infinite evolution of the divine life, like unto the being, the understanding, and the love, that are evolved in man and complete the cycle of his interior life.

But, as one of the Fathers says, the Holy Spirit, not being able to produce another life, another person, in God, would pour out in as far as possible the immense and prolific stream of His life in a new creation outside Himself, namely, in the Church, which is pre-eminently His work.

As in the beginning the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters and the divine omnipotent breath swept over inanimate nature and brought forth life in varied forms, so in the Cenacle the breath of the Holy Spirit filled the Church, His own stupendous creation, with divine immortal life.

The divine life, which began to-day in the Cenacle and from the Cenacle was speedily diffused over the entire world, manifests itself chiefly under two aspects, of which the mystical tongues of fire that came down from heaven were a figure. Fire illuminates and warms; so also the life of the Holy Spirit is a light that illuminates the mind, and a flame that warms the heart; it is light, it is truth; truth, that enlightens the soul; and love, that bears truth everywhere and gives it to all.

To-day I propose to treat briefly of the two-fold mission, the two-fold apostolate, which for eighteen centuries the Church has been carrying forward; an apostolate of divine charity to all men without exception, an apostolate by which she enlightens and nourishes their minds with the bread of truth and succors and supports their bodies by those miracles of charity and beneficence, which she alone can conceive, create, and preserve. This will be the subject of the present discourse.

Jesus once said: *"I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I, but that it be kindled?"* To-day this fire kindled and inflamed the apostles and was by them scattered over all the earth; and the fire that sets them aflame is the fire of charity.

Charity, my friends, is ever active, it is ever at work and doing. A charity that contents itself with words, that does not go beyond promises, that is kept alive by sentiment, no matter how elevated and noble, is not worthy the name of charity; it is a barren tree, a sterile love; it is beautiful and dazzling in color, but it gives neither light nor heat.

Living, active charity can not come into being except in two ways; it can have only two objects, the soul and the body, and it must be engaged in doing good either to the one or to the other. The apostolate of charity, which the Church introduced into the world to-day in Christ's name, is intended to benefit both the soul and the body. Let us begin with the apostolate of charity toward the soul, this being the more noble of the two.

Whosoever loves must give, and the gift and the manner of giving will be the measure of his love. Now what can man give to man here on earth? He can give the goods of earth, gold, and honors, and, in giving them, give pleasure. Those are, indeed, gifts not destitute of value, but they are

gifts that lie outside of man, that are extraneous to him, gifts that pass away, that slip through the hand, that for a time cheat the thirst for the happiness that consumes him, leaving him after a little while jaded, empty, and more ravenously thirsty than ever for something to fill and satisfy the void of the heart. We need no proof of this other than what the daily observation of others and sometimes of ourselves supplies.

Man can give to man something better than all these gifts of earth; he can give his heart and his love. What will man not do and dare to gain the love of another? It sometimes drives him to excess and madness. But even this feeling is fleeting and disappears with time; it is like the caress of the inconstant wind. And even the heart that gives this love little by little grows cold, ceases to beat, and all is over. The gifts of man, like his life here below, are beggarly and fleeting and it is hardly worth while for us, who are so immensely superior to them and by nature immortal, to bother our heads about them.

But there is in man a gift that does not pass away nor change, that is indestructible and eternal. And what is this gift? Truth; it is not the product of man, or a flower or fruit that springs up spontaneously in his mind; it is a heavenly seed which the hand of God alone can drop into the soul; it is a gift that God gives to

man, and that man in turn can give to man, as he communicates to others the life that he himself receives from God. I mean the truth that was revealed by God and that Christ brought upon the earth. And as the gift of this truth is the most splendid proof of God's love for man, so is it the most magnificent token of man's love for man. When he gives truth to his fellow men, truth pure and undefiled, the truth that makes them virtuous, makes them saints, guides them along the path to God, he has nothing more to give.

Now what is the apostolate which Jesus Christ established, which on Pentecost day appeared upon the earth, and which is embodied and made perpetual in the Church? This apostolate called into being a band, a whole army of men, who take it upon themselves as a duty to carry the gift of truth to their fellow men. And here I call your attention to what I am going to say in order that you may see the superhuman grandeur of this apostolate, although I have already touched upon the subject in another discourse.

The Catholic Church has the apostolate of truth; she is the bearer to men, not of gold, or silver, or precious merchandise; not of material ease and enjoyment; not of earthly greatness and glory; not of human sciences and discoveries; but of truth, or rather of that supreme truth that

lifts the mind above the things of earth, up to the very bosom of God and into the depths of His nature, where it learns what is His will, what are the limits of the lawful and the unlawful, how to tread the way of virtue, what are the rights and duties of every man toward himself, within the circle of his family, and, beyond the range of the domestic hearth, to society and to the whole human race. The Church exercises her apostolate of charity by taking the Gospel of Jesus Christ, extracting from it its pith of practical and theoretical teaching, recasting these truths into a form at once popular and simple, and then giving them to every one in suitable measure in his own tongue, in a way and at a time the most opportune. She acts as a mother who nurtures her children according to the requirements of their years, now transforming food into milk, now breaking bread into liquid, and finally giving them more solid and substantial diet. While fully appreciating all human sciences and ardently encouraging their progress and perfection, the Church never loses sight of her own goal or fails to announce the divine truths, which she holds from Christ and which alone are the source of man's true happiness both here and hereafter.

And toward what men is the Church to discharge her office of spiritual charity? These words of Christ are constantly ringing in her

ears: *"Preach the Gospel to every creature. Go, teach all nations";* and she has faithfully obeyed the precept. Her teaching is as free as the light of the sun, that is denied to none; as the air, that all may breathe; as the water, that abounds for all who will drink. She closes the doors of her schools against no one, she refuses to no one the truth of which she is the dispenser. Go through the annals of history, ecclesiastical and profane, and find if you can a single people, or city, or village, aye a single man whom she has ever shut out from her teaching or to whom she has not given freely of the charity of truth. You will find many that shamelessly cast her out, loaded her with shame and contumely, and brutally persecuted her, but not a single being to whom she ever said: "I refuse to toil for you or to dispense to you the charity of truth."

Time was when scientific men dared to say that the black race, the children of Cham, and some brutalized savage tribes could not be regarded as our brothers and that there was no duty obliging us to carry to them the knowledge of the truths of faith. But the Church never for an instant wavered in proclaiming the great principle of the common origin and of the brotherhood of all, and declared that even those miserable beings are our brothers in Christ, that He died also for them, that they, too, have a right

to the common patrimony of truth; and woe to us, if proud of our gift of faith, we refuse it to those to whom she has opened her motherly arms and whom she lovingly takes to her bosom.

To-day louder than ever before the cry goes up and the multitude rages against the inequality in the distribution of the goods of this world; it is railed at as iniquitous, unjust, and cruel; men demand in the name of their imperishable rights a more equal distribution of these goods; they loudly threaten that, if they can accomplish this in no other way, they will accomplish it by overthrowing the present order of things and making of the world a heap of smoking ruins.

The Church on the contrary establishes in her apostolate of truth the most absolute equality; she makes all sharers in her immense treasure of truth; this is common to all, and frequently the weakest and the most abject are the richest, because in this blessed communism of divine truth the Church does not prevent competition; she leaves it free to develop the energies and to create voluntary and just inequalities in favor of the most laborious.

Her charity is inexhaustible; she gives lavishly to all of her heavenly treasures of truth; she makes no humiliating and invidious distinction; she asks no pay. How long will this continue? There is no limit either of space or time:

"even to the consummation of the world," says Christ. It is now close upon twenty centuries since the Church began to exercise this charity in the service of truth, and has she yet commenced to show any sign of age or exhaustion? Has she relaxed her zeal in the work? Does she give any evidence that, weary of the struggle and of the ingratitude that meets her at every turn, she will give up the apostolate?

No; her ardor is redoubled, her army of apostles is augmented day by day, she moves forward to fresh conquests among strange peoples and resistance but increases and inflames her charity.

I call your attention to a fact, my friends, that to me seems well worthy of notice.

There is a natural desire in every man and in every society of men to make proselytes. Who is the man who does not try to win others over to his way of thinking and to make them his followers? This accounts for so many dissensions and debates, for heated polemics and magazine articles, and for the countless books that issue from the press; we wish to persuade others to think and to feel as we think and feel; we wish to hold sway over the minds and hearts of men. And what is true of the individual is still more true of peoples; each endeavors to force its own ideas upon the others and to dominate them, if not politically and materially, at least intellect-

ually. To make proselytes, to have others take up our ideas, is a craving of our nature, a craving that is felt by all except by the skeptical and the sluggish; only weak and enervated natures are destitute of the noble pride of engaging in an apostolate for the spread of their ideas and beliefs. Search the history of all peoples and you will find that this expansive force, this tendency, this necessity to carry on an apostolate for the spread of her ideas, of her Gospel, is characteristic only of the Catholic Church. Who has ever heard of the ships of China, or Japan, or India touching at the seaports of France, or Italy, or Spain, and putting ashore the apostles of Fo or Confucius, of Buddha or Brahma, to convert the people of the west to their religion? Who has ever heard of bands of Ulema, of Mussulman apostles, traversing European countries to preach the Koran and in doing so to endure fatigue and discomforts, and possibly to die as martyrs? True, they traversed, and more than once, both Europe and Asia from end to end, armed with the scimetar, subjugating by force and terror, but never subduing by love and persuasion. Our ships on the contrary, have, from the very days of the apostles, carried to those vast regions peaceful preachers of the Gospel to make conquests of souls, happy to be able to bathe the soil with their sweat and to purple it with their

blood. Has there ever since the world began been seen such an apostolate of truth as this? If you, my friends, have been able to find one such I shall be glad if you will tell me where, for I have sought for it in vain.

I have said that the charity of the Church, like that of all men, has a two-fold object, the soul and the body. When the Church offers truth to all men she exercises charity toward the soul, the purest and the noblest of all charities that can be conceived. But man is not a pure spirit; to his soul by necessity of his nature is joined a body, and toward this body the Church also exercises an apostolate of charity. This is an endless subject and I shall touch upon it briefly.

The purpose of Christ's coming on earth was to save souls; but well knowing the nature of man, who makes the goods of the body the measure of those of the soul, He began by conferring benefits on the body, and hence He cleansed the lepers, loosed the tongues of the speechless, opened the ears of the deaf, gave sight to the blind, fed the famishing multitudes, healed all manner of infirmities, and by conferring benefits on the body disposed the minds of men to accept the spiritual benefits of the soul. The Church has followed and still follows His example, and while she is all intent on exercising charity toward the soul she also exercises it toward the body, assuaging

pain and sorrow and procuring for it countless blessings.

The Church found the entire world divided into two great classes, a class of free citizens and a class of slaves, the latter beyond all comparison the more numerous of the two. To say that one is a slave is to say that he is not a man but a chattel; that he is reduced to the most abject and miserable condition that it is possible to conceive, that he is a man on a level with a brute and treated like a brute. Christ coming into the midst of such a society as this, a society that by its laws made slavery legal, uttered such words as these, words never before heard on earth: "Men, you are all the children of God, the children of one common father; you are all equal before God, you are all brothers, and destined to the same end."

This doctrine, which was first heard from the mouth of Christ, and then preached by the Apostles and by the Church, little by little found its way into the minds and hearts of men, fermented there, grew, and expanded, dissipated darkness and prejudice, changed laws, and ended by striking off the chains from slaves; and a day came, after many centuries, when the world witnessed the strange sight of masters and slaves throwing themselves into each other's arms at the foot of the cross within the bosom of the Church.

Do not, my friends, lose sight of this fact, which brings out luminously the moral force and prudence of the Church. She began and she completed the tremendous and gigantic task of abolishing slavery; she accomplished it little by little, without any violent upheavals, without appealing to material force, solely by the force of moral principles and with a perseverance and a patience more than human. The abolition of slavery for good and all throughout the entire Greek and Roman world, a result brought about by the pacific arts of persuasion and whose influence is slowly but surely making its way in every quarter of the globe, is a fact of such significance that it is of itself sufficient to acclaim the Church the first and the greatest benefactor of the human race. The millions and millions restored to liberty by her in the past and other millions that will through her teaching and exertions regain their liberty in the future are a most glorious monument to her charity.

Let us open the Gospel. Practically and morally to what may this divine code be reduced? Christ Himself tells us—the love of God and the love of our neighbor. How is this love of our neighbor to be carried into practical effect; how does it show itself? Christ again tells us: "I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stran-

ger and you took Me in; naked and you covered Me; sick and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me." Those to whom He spoke said: "Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison? Why, then, dost Thou speak thus?" Our Lord answered: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren you did it to Me."[1] Love of our neighbor, then, and love of God resolves itself into the works of charity, that you have just heard; they are the fulfilling of the Gospel law. And note, my friends, that Christ with a daring that is all His own lifts man up to God and puts God, that is Himself, in man, making man, aye, the least of men, one with Himself, in order thus to impel man and force him by a holy compulsion to love his kind and to love him with an active and an operative love.

Now, my friends, let me ask: Does not this Church, which has preached in season and out of season the religion in which all duties are reduced to active, operative charity, charity to all men without distinction, the charity of man transformed into the charity of God; does not this Church, I say, represent and personify the permanent apostolate of charity in its widest sense? She is the guardian of the sacred fire of charity;

[1] Matt. xxv. 35 seq.

she is as the sun, for, while with her rays she enlightens all minds, she warms all hearts with streams of heat and diffuses everywhere, even beyond her own bosom, her countless and ceaseless benefactions.

The Church is not alone a physician, who ascertains the malady and prescribes a remedy; she supplies the remedy and lovingly applies it; she does not, as do the learned, content herself with preaching charity and the works of charity; she herself does these works; she exercises charity; she calls into being numerous companies of men and women who become not only the apostles of charity but who give their lives to the exercise of it.

At the call of the Church, the herald of the Gospel, and under the spell of her ardent charity, beneficent institutions spring into life everywhere; hospitals for the sick, retreats for the infirm, asylums for the insane, for orphans, for the blind and for deaf mutes, homes for the aged poor and for abandoned infants, shelters for those exposed to danger, refuges for those who had gone astray, and homes for penitents, for the unfortunate and for sufferers of every class.

To restrain the insatiable greed of the pawnbroker she established loan offices, warehouses for the sale of grain, and industries and institu-

tions, which vary in their character according to time and place, a list of the names of which it would be impossible to give.

There is another stupendous apostolate of charity which is also the patrimony of the poor, namely, those innumerable congregations of beneficence and mercy. There is in Catholic countries scarcely a parish or a village, no matter how poor or insignificant, that has not its property, the rents or the income of which go to succor the needy, to provide portions for marriageable girls, to aid the convalescent, to care for babes, to assist widows, to provide work for the unemployed, to help professional men, to afford an opportunity for study to sons of the poor to whom nature has been lavish of intellectual gifts but niggardly of this world's goods, to send to sea or into the country young lads to whom nature has been a stepmother, and to provide for nobles whom misfortune has overtaken in such way as not to bring to their cheeks the blush of shame. I might continue the enumeration which fortunately is more than co-extensive with the miseries and the misfortunes to which these institutions of charity are intended to bring aid and relief, so various are they and so rich in countries that are still Catholic and Christian. These multiplied creations of charity, which flourish in every Christian land, which increase from day

to day and extend their ministrations of mercy, and to which new ones are yearly added to meet new needs and conditions, are all due, at least in their origin and inspiration, to the inexhaustible and prolific fecundity of the Church.

But the Church is not content with proclaiming the great principles of universal charity and the brotherhood of men; she is not content with inspiring and calling into life numerous and splendid foundations of beneficence, those copious and perennial fountains that water all Christian society and bring forth abundant harvests; she goes still further. Illuminated from on high with a practical wisdom that never deserts her, she gives laws and rules, worthy of herself, for the spread and development of all works of charity. Christ brought on earth those great truths by which the human race is to be saved and which constitute its glory; but He did not leave them without a guardian, and had He done so the fury of human passion would have dissipated them. He gathered them all into the Gospel, He abridged them in the Creed and in the commandments, and He committed them to a company of men, to the apostles and to the Church which guards and preserves the sacred heritage inviolate. Had not the doctrine of Christ been embodied and incarnated in the Church, it would have remained barren; it would have been like a powerful stream that is

not harnessed, that is not connected with wheels and pulleys and cylinders to receive, direct, and transmit its power; it would have been uselessly wasted. But the Church took from the hand of Christ the doctrine of charity, became its herald, practically applied it in a thousand works, and not satisfied with this, she set over all these directors filled with her own spirit; she did as does the creator of some great industry, who intrusts its management to workmen trained and instructed by Himself.

A marvelous spectacle of wisdom and charity is that which the Church reveals to us. Silently and patiently, with a wondrous self-denial all her own, far from the noise and tumult of the world, within the shadow of the sanctuary, alternating praise and prayer, labor and the exercises of piety, she brings together numerous bands of young men and young women, trains them, fills them with her spirit, the spirit of Christ, and, when the time comes, throws open the doors of her cloisters and sends this two-fold army out into the world in all directions, as Christ sent His twelve apostles into the four corners of the earth. She says by the mouth of a St. John of God: "You, my children, shall go into hospitals and serve the sick as physicians and infirmarians and your motto shall be: *Do good to your brethren.* And you," she says through St. Camillus of Lel-

lis, "shall dedicate yourselves to the saving of the souls of the sick, and, that they may more readily welcome you, look also to the needs of the body and be ministering angels when plagues and pestilences are raging." She inspires St. Jerome Amelianus to put aside the sword and cuirass, to gather together orphans left destitute by the plague, to feed and clothe and instruct them and to form of these hapless children loving fathers of families. When thousands of unfortunate men fell victims to the ferocity of Mussulman pirates and were sold into bondage in Mussulman lands, she raised up such men as St. Raymond of Pennefort, St. Felix of Valois, St. Peter Nolasco and St. John of Matha, who with their disciples went up and down Europe begging alms to succor those wretched men and exerted themselves to strike the fetters from their limbs, often volunteering to become themselves slaves in order to set them free. When Christian travelers and pilgrims in Germany, in Spain, and in the Orient were suffering hardships and were exposed to all manner of dangers, the Church raised up an intrepid militia for their defence and safety, such as the Teutonic Knights, the Knights of Calatrava, the Knights of St. John, the Knights of Rhodes, and the Knights of Malta. Even in our own day, when men were being hunted as beasts in the wilds of central Africa

and whole districts were made desolate by the traffic in human flesh, the Church came to their rescue and defence by calling into existence the Knights of the Sahara. Wherever there is pain and suffering in hospitals, in refuges, in asylums, in penal institutions, in homes for the old and decrepit, in schools for the poor, wherever the tender hand of the mother is needed, there these disciples of charity enter and take up their permanent abode. Works of charity more properly belong to women than to men, because they have more heart than men, are more patient, have a keener instinct of love, and are richer in the spirit of sacrifice. St. Vincent of Paul with divine art gathered about him a whole army of young virgins, threw a white or a black veil over their heads, subjected them to a rigid but mild discipline, distributed them into bands according to the needs of time and place; and said to them: "Go, my daughters; have no fear; the world will respect you and God will be your defence in the midst of danger. Go into hospitals and refuges, into orphanages and schools, into asylums for the insane, into every place where there is anguish and suffering, and show of what heroic charity a Christian virgin is capable; spread throughout Europe, go into Africa and Asia, into America and Australia, instruct and comfort, gather little

children about you, serve the sick without considering whether they are of your country or foreigners, friends or enemies, whether they are Catholics or heretics, Mussulmans or Pagans; let it suffice for you to know that they are God's creatures, and that He, your Spouse, whose image you bear in your hearts, and who demands of you to make a sacrifice of yourselves for love of Him, has also died for them."

And there also is John Bosco, Cottolegno, Lewis of Casoria, and hundreds of others; there is not a city of Italy that can not boast of at least one such, who collect from the streets, from the piazzas, and from all sides abandoned children, the outcasts, the vagrants, the vicious, and the depraved who would be some day the scourge of society, give them a shelter in homes provided by their charity, instruct them in the arts and sciences, infuse into them a love of labor, rekindle in them the smoldering embers of honor and virtue, and teach them to be dutiful children at home and useful members of society. But why go on enumerating to you the infinitude of works in which, as the age and needs demand, is exemplified the apostolate of the Church? No matter whither we turn our eyes, whether to the domestic hearth or to society at large, to cities or to hamlets, to the favorites of fortune or to the outcast,

the consoling sight of the Church's charity is ever before us and fills us with wonder and holy pride.[1]

And even now I have not fully described, I have only touched upon, the apostolate of charity, which for eighteen centuries the Church has carried on throughout the whole world by her teachings and her institutions and by calling into being apostles so numerous and so various that they minister to every form of misery and distress. But the little I have said, not the hundredth part of the truth, gives me the privilege of asking if I am not right in affirming that the Church has ever preserved and disseminated that flame of charity which Christ came on earth to kindle?

I fancy I hear some one say: "We do not deny all you have said of the apostolate of charity of the Catholic Church; on the contrary, we recognize it and we give her all due praise. But do you not go beyond the truth when you give the Catholic Church the exclusive glory of all this? Look at Protestant countries; works of charity are abundant among them as well as among ourselves, and if in this most noble rivalry they are not superior to us, they are certainly our equals. There are many, aye, very many unbelievers, positivists, materialists, and freethinkers who

[1] I could wish that every one would read that charming book left us by Massimo De Camp, entitled The Private Charity of Paris. It is an epic to Christian charity sung by a freethinker.

give lavishly of their means for works of public benevolence. This charity is rather the glorious boast of the progress of the race, it is the heritage of all without distinction of creed and it is due to the advancements of nations in civilization and culture."

I answer: You concede that this marvelous flowering of charity is to be seen, if not alone in the Catholic Church, at least only in Christianity. Nothing, or next to nothing of the kind is to be seen in Brahmanism, in Buddhism, in Moslemism, or in hardly any other religion, ancient or modern. And this one fact proves that operative and all-pervading charity is inseparably linked with the name of Christ, a singular fact and worthy of consideration.

Moreover, I would have you bear in mind that prior to the sixteenth century Protestant churches did not exist, the fathers of Protestants as well as ours lived in the bosom of the Catholic Church; and is it not true that prior to that time, prior to the time when they came into existence, charity was preached and its practical apostolate in full swing and vigor? Is it not true that at that time institutions of charity covered the whole Catholic world and that its apostles prosecuted their work whenever and wherever the condition of the age and of society permitted? Two things, then, are evident; first, that the apostolate of charity is

not the creation of Protestants, but of that Church which traces its lineage back through the centuries to Jesus Christ, namely, of the Catholic Church, our mother; and, next, that the Protestants learned the methods of this charity from the Church and carried them with them when they went out from her. They are like children who forsake their mother and go into far-away lands; they bear with them, not alone a memory of their mother, but also of her admonitions and propensities, and they almost unconsciously copy her habits and customs. Was she good and kind and charitable? Even in distant lands they will imitate her.

If we ask our Protestant brethren: "Why do you practise charity?" They will answer: "Because the Gospel tells us to do so." The answer is excellent. But who preserved the Gospel and put it into their hands? The Catholic Church. To her, then, they are indebted for the charity of which they boast. On this point of Gospel teaching there is no difference between them and us; we are followers of the same Gospel and children of the same Church. They may refuse to own the Church as their mother, still she is their mother. They are like children, who, in a moment of anger and spite, disclaim their mother, but the tongue they speak, their habits, their physiognomy, their traditions, many of the works they do, betray

them in spite of themselves and attest their true origin.

So also those unbelievers, who, while practising works of charity, assume an attitude of hostility to the Church. When they went out from her they carried with them, like the prodigal son, a share of the paternal inheritance, which they are squandering in a strange land; in retaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ they have retained after a fashion the law of charity, if not its letter and its spirit. They have been blessed with good hearts and, acting on their impulse, they observe the natural law of charity without heeding the supernatural law of the Gospel, which elevates and ennobles charity. They have been born in a Christian society, in an atmosphere vibrating with Catholic life; this atmosphere they have inhaled in full draughts around the family fireside, they have imbibed it from reading, they have been saturated with it in a thousand ways by their association and environment, and how could they wholly escape its potent and pervading influence? They have been formed and inspired by the charity that vivifies the body of the Church; they have been subdued by it and hurried along in its current, and, discarding the creed, the theoretical part of religion, they have retained, at least materially, some of the practical works of charity. They are like men who, living high up on the

mountain-side in a pure bracing air, still feel some of its beneficial effects after they have come down into the malaria of the valley. The works of charity which these men do, who are outside the Church and hostile to her, are but the natural result of her influence. Had the Church never been, neither would these works, or very few of them have ever been accomplished. Had those unbelievers, who are often so profuse in works of charity, been born among the Tartars or Chinese, among the savage tribes of the Kongo or among the Indians of the Rocky Mountains, would they, think you, have ever done what they do now in our midst? Would they have performed those works of charity, which not unfrequently excite our amazement? Who would have the hardihood to say so, or even to think so? It is, then, clear that these works of unbelievers or infidels are to be ascribed to the Christian influences under which they live and are traceable to Catholic faith and practice.

One more observation and I have done. We Catholics do not deny that heretical Churches and Protestants, and even unbelievers, preach fraternal charity and do works of benevolence, some more, some less, creating institutions and giving of their wealth quite as generously as we, if not more so, for they are rich, richer far than we are, and it is not surprising that they should surpass

us in such charities. But there is one thing in which the Catholic apostolate of charity can never be either surpassed or equaled by heresy or unbelief, one thing in which the Catholic Church towers like a giant above them and in which the divine virtue, that is her life and inspiration, shines resplendent.

Heretical Churches, Protestants, and freethinkers have said and taught beautiful and sublime things about charity, things that they first heard from the Church; they have given and still give with lavish hand and they have built and still build palatial institutions of charity for the relief of suffering, but they have never been able to conceive and to create an army of men and women, who, besides their money and their property, *give themselves for their whole lives,* and give themselves joyously and without human reward, to the service of their brethren, continuous victims of charity, their very identity often unknown, and all and solely for the love of God. Heretics, Protestants, and freethinkers may indeed give of their wealth to relieve want and suffering, but they have never learned to give themselves. This is the glory of the Catholic Church alone, a glory that no Church and no freethinker will contest with her. She has an immense army of male Religious and of heroic Sisters, whose presence fills all the earth, who night and day consecrate them-

selves to the service of the poor, to nursing the sick, to assuaging their pain, and, if need be, to give their lives for them, and she promises them no reward except that of heaven beyond the grave.

When heretical Churches, Protestants, and free-thinkers show us an enduring miracle of charity such as this, we shall be ready to admit a comparison between their apostolate and that of the Catholic Church, but for the present—no.

DISCOURSE VIII

Can There Be Salvation Outside the Church?

THE industrious husbandman, having cleared his field of all noxious weeds, ploughs the ground, opens the furrows, sows his seed, covers it carefully, patiently waits until the rays of the sun warm it into life, and the dews and rains water it and make it sprout and grow, and then he joyfully and hopefully looks forward to the harvest time. Jesus Christ, the divine cultivator of the great field of this earth, wasted by the negligence of man and covered with thistles and thorns, did the same. He came and by patient and loving toil broke up the hard earth and sowed with lavish hand the good seed of divine truth, then He went up to heaven and from there, as He had promised, warmed the seed by the heat of the Holy Ghost, refreshed it with the dews and the waters of His grace, and the field that had been so sterile and barren was white with a wealth of grain.

The apostles and disciples went into every corner of the earth; they continued and extended the work of the divine Master; the Church was founded; the lamp, that was never to be quenched, was lighted—the lamp that was to enlighten all men and fill them with the sacred fire of charity.

On this solemn day of Pentecost we commemorate the founding of the Church; on this day she was born and came forth from the Cenacle to carry to the furthest bounds of the earth the light of truth, and with truth the flame of charity and the seed of that progress and civilization which are the boast of our age.

It is only fitting, then, that on this anniversary of the birth of the Church I should speak to you of the Church, a subject beyond all others most mighty and vast.

The Church! Her divine origin, her form, her organism, her legislative power, her rights in relation to the civil powers of earth, her infallible magisterium, her uninterrupted existence down through the centuries, her unity in her invisible and visible head, her dogmatic and moral teaching, her apostolicity, her universality, her sanctity—all these furnish ample and most important subjects for discourses; some of these I have treated already, others I may treat at another time, if the merciful God prolongs my life. To-day I shall submit to your consideration a point of doctrine which is rarely touched upon and which should fill every believing soul with joy. This is it: There is salvation also outside the Catholic Church, and we shall inquire who can be saved, and how, and why. There are few sub-

jects that have a greater claim upon your attention.

God is an infinite being and therefore He is absolute truth and essential life. Everything, that is, everything that is true and good, comes from Him alone, and outside Him there is nothing. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, became man; and He communicated all being, all truth, all life, in the measure in which it was capable of receiving these, to His human nature, which truly became the *light* that *glows* and *burns,* and which can alone say: "I am truth, I am light, I am life." No one can think of going to God except through Jesus Christ, who is the way, and the door, and the prime Mediator, of whom it is written: "*Neither is there salvation in any other.*" But as the Father poured out all His infinite essence into the Son, who is equal to Him, and as the Son poured out all His wealth, in as far as that was possible, into the human nature He personally assumed, so also the Son of God made man prolongs Himself, as we should say, in the Church; in her He deposits this truth, in her He expands His own life, or I should rather say, He Himself lives and works in the Church as the Father lives and works in Him. What follows from this? This very simple consequence: As truth and life can not be had except through Jesus Christ, so also

we can not go to Jesus Christ except through the Church. She is the necessary bridge which must be crossed to go to Him. Hence as Christ said, *"No man cometh to the Father but by Me,"* so can the Church truthfully say: "No man cometh to Jesus Christ but by me." The words of the General Council of Lateran express an elementary truth: "There is one universal Church of all the faithful, outside which absolutely no one is saved. *Una est fidelium universalis Ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur.*"

But I hear human reason cry out in protest, saying: "What? Have you the heart to say that all who die outside your Church will be cast forever into the fires of hell? Count up if you can all the millions of millions of souls that have been born and have died outside your Church. And do you dare assert that all these have been lost, and lost because they did not enter your Church—those who did not enter her because they felt no obligation to do so, nay, who did not know that such a Church existed? This would be to condemn to the most frightful of punishments, to the pains of hell, millions of men for a fault involuntarily committed, for the transgression of a law of whose existence they were ignorant. Could a more horrible injustice than this be conceived? And, then, to have the hardihood to charge God with it, He who is not only justice itself, but good-

ness itself; He who created all these millions of men to make them happy, and who, we are told, died to save all without exception!" And the unbeliever adds: "A Church that teaches so atrocious and wicked a doctrine is beyond the pale of human reason and on this, if on no other score, is irrevocably condemned."[1]

Now, my friends, this heap of absurdities and errors, which unbelievers fancy they detect in Catholic teaching and which puts them into such a rage, is only a little mist that a puff of wind will sweep away. Our unbelieving brethren will allow me to tell them very frankly that they are ignorant of Catholic teaching on this point, and that they impute to us a doctrine which is not only not ours, but which we reject. An exposition of the general teaching of the Church will solve every difficulty.

Outside the Catholic Church there is no salvation. This is the formal definition of the Church.

[1] I remember when I was a lad hearing preachers say that all those who are outside the Church are condemned to hell. I was horrified and said to myself: "Is it possible? If these poor souls do not know the truth, they are guiltless; how, then, can God cast them forever into hell?" I remember also asking now and then if this were possible. The answer was: "God is the Master and He is always just." By no means would He be just if their doctrine were that of the Church. And it would cost them so little to say: "All are lost *who by their own fault and voluntarily are outside the Church.*" Let preachers, when they announce this truth, always add these words so as not to distress the souls of the weak and run counter to man's common-sense conception of justice.

Now who are those who are outside the Church? It would manifestly be an error to confound them all together, as if the condition of each and all was identical. It is only reasonable that they should be distributed into various classes.

Heretics and schismatics belonging to the Russian, the Photian, the Nestorian, the Eutychian, the Armenian Churches, and to the various branches into which these are already, or are being daily divided, are outside the Church; and so also are heretics and schismatics belonging to the Anglican established Church, to the Presbyterian, the Lutheran, the Calvinist, the Zwinglian, and to all the countless sects that have sprung out of these. There are above two hundred millions who profess to believe in Christ and receive His Baptism.[1] All those that die before coming to the use of reason, and they are possibly a third, are saved, as are our own, by virtue of Baptism. Add to these such as are mentally weak and uninstructed, whose condition is that of a perpetual childhood, and who can neither reason nor distinguish the true religion from the false. All this last class will certainly be saved by Baptism alone.

But what will become of all those adults, who

[1] It is a dogma of faith that Baptism conferred by heretics and schismatics, and even by pagans is valid. If the Baptism of some Protestant sects is doubtful it is so because of defect of matter or form.

live and die in heresy or schism, and there are millions of them? Will they all be irrevocably lost because they are outside the Church of Jesus Christ? By no means, my friends. Go up and down countries whose inhabitants are heretics or schismatics, and how many thousands of upright, simple, pious souls will you not find who believe in Jesus Christ, who love Him, and live tranquilly in their Churches, each being absolutely certain that his is the one true Church. You will find such in cities and hamlets, in palaces and cabins, in workshops and fields, and in fact everywhere. When we see those poor heretics and schismatics, born in heresy and schism, clinging to their errors as to a second heritage received from their fathers, and in their ignorance, now become a fatal necessity, surrounding this heritage with reverence and loving it as the truth; when going through cultured countries like Germany and Switzerland, we see those Protestants gathered together in their churches, listening attentively to what they hold to be the word of God; when we hear them praying, invoking the name of Jesus Christ, praising and blessing God; when we see them scrupulously observing the Lord's Day and leading a Christian life, how can we believe that all these, heretics and schismatics though they are, will on the last day be cast off by Jesus Christ and committed to everlasting punishment?

These, our fellow men, through no fault of theirs, are deprived of the fulness of truth which we possess, but they cling tenaciously to what they have, they receive from Jesus Christ the grace they ask, they receive it by means of the sacraments they still preserve, and they receive it through the faith and charity which God in His mercy stirs up and keeps alive in their souls, ready as they are to believe and to do what God would have them believe and do. God searches the heart and He sees that at bottom those souls are upright and anxious to do His will, and He accepts the homage they unconsciously pay to error, believing it to be truth, as done to Himself.

If we concede, as we ought to concede, all this in regard to a very large number of Protestants, living in civilized countries, such as Europe and America, it is but reasonable that we should also concede as much and more in regard to heretics and schismatics scattered over Russia and all the countries of the east, who still preserve the hierarchy, the sacraments, and almost the whole body of revealed truth, who are less instructed, whose errors are more ancient and inveterate, and whose difficulty both in detecting their errors and in casting them off is incomparably greater. All these souls who glory in the name of Jesus Christ, who are consecrated to Him in Baptism, who live uprightly, who, if they fall, rise by

prayer, penitence, and the grace that is never denied those who sincerely ask it, and who bravely begin again, all these souls belong not indeed to the body, but to the soul of the Church; they belong to Jesus Christ. Bodily they are dwelling in the tents of sinners, but in spirit they are in the tabernacles of the just; they are soldiers of Jesus Christ, who during the fury of the battle were dispersed and, without being conscious of how they got there, found themselves in the camp of the enemy; they are Israelites, who on the fatal day of dispersion found themselves mixed with the Samaritans; in body they worship Baal on Garizim, in heart they adore Jehovah on Mount Sion. Said Jehovah by the prophet, "I will leave Me seven thousand men in Israel, whose knees have not been bowed before Baal";[1] that is, a large number of elect souls. And the same may with greater reason be said of countries either heretical or in schism.

This teaching of the Church is admirably expressed by St. Augustine: "There are those also who are sunk in heresy and in the superstitions of the gentiles, and even among these God knows His own; for in the ineffable presence of God many, who seem outside the Church, are within it, and many, who seem inside the Church, are outside it. All these therefore, who, if I may so say, are in-

[1] 3 Kings xix. 18.

visible and hidden within, constitute that closed garden, that sealed fountain, that paradise full of fruit of which the Sacred Books speak."[1]

And elsewhere he says that, as Abraham had children, not only of Sara, his wife, but also of Agar, so also Christ has children, not only of the Catholic Church, His only spouse, but also of heretical and schismatical Churches, who, in spite of themselves, through those sacraments which they still administer, beget children to Him.

What is to be said of those who are cut off from the Church by one of those mistakes, which are possible even in her, since she judges, not from what is within, but from what appears on the outside?

"If," says Monsabré, "they have, through an error of fact, been unjustly punished; if they have been stricken down by the sword of excommunication, which cuts them off from the benefits of external fellowship, and they bear their chastisement patiently and with dignity, committing to God the judgment of their cause and with an humble heart preserving the precious treasure of

[1] Sunt etiam qui in haeresibus, vel in gentilium superstitionibus iacent; et tamen illic novit Dominus qui sunt eius. Namque in illa ineffabili praesentia Dei, multi qui foris videntur intus sunt: et multi qui intus videntur foris sunt. Ex illis ergo omnibus qui, ut ita dicam, intrinsecus et in occulto sunt intus, constat ille hortus conclusus, fons signatus, puteus aquae vivae, paradisus cum fructu pomorum (De Bapt. Contra Donatistas, lib. v, 38).

grace, are not they living members of the invisible Church?"[1]

And what is to be said of those who having been born in the Church, having grown up in the Church, and having been fed at her breasts, have risen up against her, denied her faith, angrily turned their backs upon her, and have dared to say: "From this moment we are no longer thy children, and thou art no longer our mother—and publicly apostatize?"

These have voluntarily gone out from their father's house, they have severed themselves from the family of which they were members, or they deserved to be cast out by the master of the house; it is but just that they should bear the consequences of their separation. They wished to be exiles from their fatherland; let them continue in their exile. Whom have they to blame but themselves? The doors of the house of the common father of all are ever open, the way back to their fatherland is unobstructed, if they come back they will be received as was the prodigal son by his father, but as long as they obstinately persist in their rebellion and disown the Church, their mother, they must give up all hope of being remembered among the children of God, their father. Who will ever accuse the Church of being cruel and unjust, if she casts out from her

[1] Conf. 51.

bosom her turbulent and rebellious children, or, allowing them to depart, treats them as strangers, though she never ceases to grieve over them?

And do not you, fathers of families, act in the same way when, to preserve peace and order, you drive from your homes your disorderly and intractable children? And do not you, officials of societies, do the same and for the same reason, when you strike from your lists of membership the names of the unworthy, or permit them, if they will, to go of their own accord? And do you think the Church unjust if she does the same? Suppose a soldier of our army should be cashiered, or should cravenly desert his colors and go over to the enemy and join his ranks, would any of you for a moment think of regarding him any longer as a soldier of the army he had deserted? He is no longer of our army; he is a renegade, a coward, a traitor. The Church acts, and ought to act, in the same way with apostates; both faith and reason demand that she should.

Will these, then, be lost? If they are, they, and no one else, will be the authors of their misfortune.

But is there not a gleam of hope for those wretches?

If at the right moment when these unfortunate beings are making a profitless struggle against the iron hand of death, which is surely closing its

grasp upon them; if, when on the threshold of the house of death, sectaries are keeping guard to prevent the priest, whom they have called, from entering; if when they are about to fall into the abyss below, from those agonized souls, moved by a final impulse of grace, there comes a cry of repentance, of hope, of love for God, one sole sob, one moan, which God alone understands, those poor unfortunates may again enter into the soul of the Church, be made to live again by her warm breath, and while their corpses are being let down into the grave without cross or prayer, as if accursed, their souls may be taking their flight to heaven and angels may be welcoming them with joy. These are mysteries of mercy impenetrable to our eyes, but not rare, I trust, with God. The Church, while placing so many of her children on her altars and solemnly declaring them saints, has never pronounced over the tomb of the impenitent suicide, or of the blasphemer, the sentence: "He is damned." A ray of hope, though it be only the faintest, may always rest on the tomb even of the wickedest of men who die out of the Church, for, as she herself says, only to God is known the number of the elect.

Thus far we have spoken only of those who die outside the bosom of the Catholic Church, but who have at some time received Baptism, who were in consequence for a while at least her children

and bore written on their foreheads the mark of Christians.

But what of those millions of unbelievers in both the old continents and the new, who live in forests and deserts, who are sunk in the lowest depths of moral degradation, who worship serpents, from whose altars ascend the fumes of their brothers' blood, and who perform execrable rites? What will become of those unfortunate men who have never known the Faith, who have never been baptized, and who have never been able to gain any knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ?

Fear not, my friends. Follow me attentively and you will be fully convinced that not only the justice of God, but His goodness also, will be vindicated here and that our adversaries are again attacking not the substance of things, but their shadows.

Let us begin with infants who die without Baptism. True, some old theologians thought that these might be said to be not wholly exempt from light punishment. A *light* punishment, but an eternal one! Can the two terms go together? I think not.

Let us set aside these theologians, who are few in number and far from representing the Church, and who have been well named the tormentors of infants: *"Tortores infantium."*

Let us consult the prince of theologians, whom well nigh all Catholic schools follow, and who may be justly said to be the most authoritative organ of Catholic tradition and the greatest of all the teachers that the Church has produced. His words, which are always marvelously clear, translated into our tongue, are these: "The souls of children who die without Baptism are not deprived of a *natural cognition,* such as according to its nature is due to a soul separated from the body; but they do lack that *supernatural cognition,* which we have by virtue of faith, because they did not receive the Faith here, either actually, by preaching, or potentially, by the sacrament of Baptism.

"Without doubt nature requires that the soul should know that it is created to be happy and that this happiness consists in the possession of the supreme good, but nature does not know that this supreme good, to which man is destined, is the glory of the saints, revealed by the spirit of God. The souls of infants, ignorant of the fact that they are deprived of so great a good, feel no pain because of this privation and possess in peace all that is proper to their nature." [1]

Again: "These infants are separated from God in regard to that union which constitutes glory, but by no means in the sense that they are not

[1] Quaest. De Malo, v–a. 3.

united to Him by participation of natural goods, or that they can not enjoy Him by natural cognition and natural love."[1]

Again: "They have the sad heritage of the sin of origin, but no pain of sense, no sorrow, only the privation of the immediate and beatific vision of God."[2]

But you will say: How can those infants help suffering, and suffering intensely, being, as they are, deprived of seeing God? This objection is not difficult to answer. Which of us, as St. Thomas sagaciously remarks, feels any inconvenience at not having the wings of birds? None of us, because our bodies are not so made as to require them; but we should feel it to be a decided loss were we without eyes or hands, since both are necessary to us and belong to our body. So also those infants can feel no pain at being deprived of the intuitive vision of God, because they have no idea of its existence, and hence can have no desire for it. They are perfectly happy in the state in which they are, having such knowledge of God and such love for Him as are possible to them and which fully satisfy all their longings. Can a doctrine be conceived clearer than this, more reasonable, or more comforting?

[1] Lib. ii. Senten dis. 33, q. 1, a, 2 ad 5.
[2] De Malo, q. v–a, 2.

From infants born in original sin who quit this earth without having been baptized and without having been able to do a single act worthy either of merit or demerit, let us pass on to the consideration of adults, who are born and live and die in Paganism, or in Buddhism, or in Brahmanism, or in any other religion. What will be their eternal lot? Being responsible for their acts, they must at death take one of two courses; they must go either to heaven or to eternal punishment. If they go to heaven, our teaching that outside the Church and without Baptism there is no hope of salvation, is not true; if they go to eternal punishment, we profess a doctrine against which human reason with all its strength protests and ever will protest. How are we to escape from this terrible dilemma? Very easily. Kindly give me your attention in this last and most interesting part of this Discourse. St. Thomas will still be our safe guide. It pertains to Providence, he says, to supply every man with the means necessary for his salvation, provided no obstacle is put in the way of His doing so. Hence if an infidel, or a savage who has grown up in the forest, should follow the inspirations of natural reason, which tend towards good and shrink at evil, we must hold it as most certain that God, by an internal inspiration, would reveal to him

what is necessary to be believed, or would send some one to instruct him, as He once sent Peter to instruct Cornelius.[1]

From this teaching, which is precisely what common-sense would say, it follows that an infidel or a Pagan, who being outside the Church and knowing nothing either of the Church or of the Gospel, follows his reason, obeys the laws of justice, more or less legibly written on the conscience, and does all he can do, will, under the impulse of grace, which God never denies to any one, come to a knowledge of the truth and to Baptism by ways known only to God. It follows again that God will give a supernatural light to such a soul, which will dispose him to believe all that is necessary to believe, and will lead him to embrace in one general and implicit act of faith the sum of all revealed divine truths, and he will be justified. Does not the Catechism teach us that, besides the Baptism of water and the Baptism of blood, there is another known as the Baptism of *desire?*

Valentinian was a catechumen and was murdered while St. Ambrose was preparing to baptize him, and the saint in writing his eulogy, says: "I have lost him, whom I was about to baptize; but he has not lost the grace he asked." Say that with God's aid, which is never denied, those poor

[1] De Verit. 9–14, 2–11 adl.

infidels observe, as best they can, the law of nature; that they are ready, in case they know the truth, to embrace it; that down in the bottom of their simple and upright souls they are crying out sincerely, though faintly as yet, saying: "O God, whoever Thou art, be merciful to us. We are ready to do Thy will; we are in Thy hands; and we will do whatever it may please Thee to signify to us." Would not a loving disposition such as this, such a cry of the soul, going up to God and invoking Him as best they could, be enough to bring down upon them the light of faith and the flame of charity, and to transform them into adopted sons? I love to think it would.

Is not this implicit desire of Baptism, this loving disposition to seek God, enough to justify a Pagan? He lives according to the light of reason, he fulfils the law as well as he can, and if he transgresses it he repents; and surely he will have as his reward the *natural* felicity that will satisfy his every desire.

Justin Martyr, speaking of Socrates, calls him a Christian, because in following reason, a radiance of the divine Word, he followed Christ Himself, the Word, or the Reason itself of the Father.

But has not the Church said, and does not she say over and over again without ceasing, that whosoever knows not Jesus Christ, whosoever does not believe in Him, is already judged? Yes;

she says that whosoever voluntarily and through his own fault will not know Jesus Christ, whosoever with eyes open spurns His teachings, is already condemned, but not he who, through no fault of his own, is walking in the darkness of error. Would you have God condemn one who sinned through inculpable ignorance? Even man would not be guilty of such injustice, and would God?

The voice of the Church is clear and ringing. She condemns any one who dares to assert that God does not grant grace to any one not in her bosom; that Jews, heretics, and Pagans do not receive an influx of Christ's grace; that to be ignorant of the faith of which one knows nothing is a sin. Does not all this clearly prove that those who are outside the Church and in good faith, and who do all they can to live uprightly and virtuously, have the grace of God and with His grace the means of salvation?

Even the Catechism teaches this. Those who are guilty of grave or mortal sin certainly condemn themselves. But what is necessary in order to have a grave or mortal sin? The matter of the sin must be grave, and surely to be outside the Church and to be deprived of faith is a very grave matter. Next, there must be a full knowledge of the fault committed, and, by consequence, full and deliberate consent of the will. Take

away these two latter conditions, and the sin, while materially it may be enormous, in the presence of God, and even in the light of reason, is no sin at all. Now tell me honestly what does that huge mass of Pagans, Brahmans, Buddhists, and infidels know of our religion? What can they know of it, sunk as they are in ignorance and believing their own to be the only true one, and every other false?

Good God! Do we not frequently find our own intelligent people, who frequent our churches, who have learned their catechism as children, who know how to read, who have been brought up in a Christian family, and live in a Christian society, do we not, I say, often find these ignorant of the principal teachings of our faith? And then shall we marvel that our brethren, who have been born and who have grown up in the midst of superstition, who live a barbarous or semi-barbarous life, are unable to know our religion? I leave the answer to you.

My friends, I can not refrain from reading to you the solemn words of the Pontiff, Pius IX, contained in the document of gravest import, dated August 10, 1863, and addressed to the universal Church, for they put the seal on all I have thus far said: "You know, my most dear children and venerable brothers, that those, who, being *invincibly* ignorant of our holy religion, ob-

serve the natural law and the precepts that God has engraven on the heart of every man, and who are disposed to obey God and live virtuously and righteously, can by the aid of divine light and grace obtain eternal life; since God, who searches the heart, who sees clearly and knows the sentiments, the thoughts, and the dispositions of all, can not in His supreme mercy and goodness by any means permit that even one soul should be eternally punished that has not separated itself from Him by voluntary mortal sin." I hardly think that the teaching that we have been setting forth could be more clearly or more authoritatively established.

Note, too, the marked difference between the divine laws and the human. In civil society it is sufficient to promulgate a law in the usual way, and at the time fixed it is taken for granted that every one, even the illiterate, knows the law. It must be at once obeyed and any one transgressing it is punished. It will not avail him to say that he was ignorant of it. The answer will be, "That will not help you; you should have known it." In civil society it is necessary to take it for granted that the law is known and, if necessary, to punish any one transgressing it, though he was ignorant of its existence. But it is not so with the divine law. Every one will answer to God for the observance of the divine, the natural, and

the positive law according to his knowledge of it and all special conditions will be taken into account. God reads the book of the conscience of each man and according to that He judges. Could a more reasonable doctrine be asked?

It is founded on that principle of faith and natural reason which theologians express in this most simple formula, which is as evident as an axiom: "God does not refuse grace to him who does his best: *Facienti quod ex se est, Deus non denegat gratiam.*"

How can God, who is so profuse, even lavish, in the natural order, in all that is necessary to life, to its preservation and development, be stingy or niggardly in what is necessary to the supernatural life, the more so since the natural life is as a means to the supernatural? What a profusion of light and color! What a superabundance of air and water! What a plenty of food, of sweet smells, of all that is agreeable to the taste! No mind can comprehend the magnificence of the Creator in the order of nature, and science itself, overcome at the sight of this grand spectacle, is amazed and silent. And would you have God, the Redeemer and Saviour, to act differently from God the Creator? Would you have Him invert the order of things and give lavishly, where it is least important, and give niggardly where it is most important? Will that

God, who, in the supernatural order, for the saving of men, made Himself man, suffered and died for them, who gave Himself to them as food and drink, and who abides perpetually with them hidden under the sacramental shadows, measure His grace to them bit by bit and drop by drop? Not so did He measure His blood, the price of their redemption. Will He, who invites all to throw themselves into His arms, who goes in search of sinners, who sought out the lost sheep, who seeks out poor heretics, schismatics, and infidels who do what they can to know Him and follow Him, will He, I say, refuse to give to such that small measure of grace without which they can not be saved? You feel, my friends, that to entertain such doubts, to ask such questions is an affront to the goodness of God, that queen of all the perfections, and the one of which He is the most jealous. Let, then, the great Catholic theological formula stand out luminously as an axiom and as a dogma, namely: "God does not refuse grace to him who does his best."

But what do all those who are outside the Church do to gain a knowledge of the truth and to enter into her tents? What do they do? We can not know the impenetrable secrets of the conscience. Only the eye of God penetrates there and it would be sacrilegious rashness to put ourselves in His place. God knows ways, of the very

existence of which we are ignorant. We see the outside of things; He sees within and sounds the depths of the heart of man. Where we see an enormous sin, He may only see an infirmity, a betrayal of the passions, the consequence of a sad heritage, bequeathed by ancestors. The secret biography of souls is written by each day by day, and minute by minute, but frequently in a way quite different from what we judge. To read it aright, without fear of mistake, as God reads it, we must know to the very bottom the disposition of each, the great influence exercised upon him by heredity, physical and moral; we must know what his education at home and elsewhere has been; what books he has read, his manner of life, the food he has eaten, the climate in which he has lived, his passions and hopes, fears and friendships, all the accidents that have wrought upon his senses and his soul, the thousands and thousands of circumstances in life that have flowed in upon his mind and will, and which increase or diminish the responsibility of his acts and possibly take it away altogether. "God," says one who in good faith spent long years in pursuing the paths of error and deserves to be listened to, "takes all things into account; the misfortunes that accompany our entrance into life, our ignorance, our infirmity, our faults of education, the influence of our physical and moral surround-

ings, the hardships of life, and even the smallest germ of good will. In the fatherly reckonings of Providence His mercy, more frequently than we know, outstrips His justice. One whom we think full of malice may be but a dissipated wretch to whom He will be merciful; and another whom we think confirmed in iniquity may be silently haunted by grace that will bear fruit on the threshold of eternity."[1]

And now in bringing this Discourse to an end allow me to submit to you two or three observations, which I think useful and which lie close to my heart.

Considering, on the one hand, the infinite goodness of God, visible in all His works, and more than in any other in the great work of Redemption, and, on the other, the frailty and the wretchedness of our nature, so inclined to evil, I feel confident that He will deal as mercifully, as may be, with the sons of Adam and especially with such as have been born and have grown up in error. I feel confident, too, that the number of the elect will far exceed the number of the reprobate,

[1] This was Father Faber. He was a schoolfellow of Gladstone. He was a Protestant and an exemplary minister; after long and patient study and incredible effort he was converted. Professor Newman, who did all he could to prevent the conversion of Faber, subsequently followed him and was created Cardinal by Leo XIII. He was a man of perfect intellect and great learning. The life of Faber is well worth reading; it is a revelation of the workings of grace.

so that the wicked one who fell from the heights above may not be able in the pit below to boast that he has in hell more slaves than the Creator and Redeemer of the world has sons in heaven. No, I can never conceive it possible that the kingdom of the Man-God, of the adorable Jesus, can be even numerically inferior to the kingdom of the adversary whom He utterly vanquished on the cross and put as a footstool under His feet.

With minds and hearts filled with the great and measureless goodness of God, and conscious of our own ignorance, let us never in the presence of the body, or at the tomb, of a heretic, schismatic, or pagan, or even of a freethinker, who has died outside the Church, utter such words as these: "There is a lost soul." Leave judgment to God and to God alone. Man has only to be silent and adore His secrets.

Finally, my friends, bear in mind the words of Jesus Christ: "It shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon, that is, for Gentiles, than for the children of the Kingdom who know the truth." We who have been born in the bosom of the Church, who have been taught from childhood onward by that loving mother, who have been surrounded by so many aids and means of salvation, and above all, we men of the sanctuary, who have been set upon a candlestick to be a light unto others, who are associated with Christ in the

highest of offices, that of saving souls, and who superabound in all the gifts of grace, we shall have no excuse, or if any, one incomparably less than that of our brothers.

Sons and daughters of the Catholic Church, instead of curiously and uselessly inquiring what will be the lot of those who live separated from us, let us look to ourselves; let us thank God for the faith we have received, labor to propagate it, and by living conformably to the teachings of that faith make sure of our own salvation.

DISCOURSE IX

The Communion of Saints

THE whole of the patriarchal and Mosaic economy, its prophets and its rites, its sacrifices and its laws, all have reference to Christ, who is their end and term, according to the beautiful phrase of the Apostle: *"The end of the Law is Christ."* So also the words, the acts, the life, the death, the resurrection, the ascension of Christ, all tend to one point, all converge toward, all center in His most excellent work, the Church. She is His kingdom; His spouse, His very body. "Jesus," writes the Apostle, "loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."[1] The establishment of the Church is the immediate end or purpose of Christ's coming on earth and of all the works wrought by Him here below; and this Church is to-day born in the Cenacle amid the vivifying fires of the Holy Spirit. The mystery, then, that we celebrate to-day requires that I should speak

[1] Eph. v. 25 seq.

to you of the Church, a wide subject and an important one.

I have already spoken of the divine power of the Church, of her apostolate of truth and charity, of the necessity of belonging to her body, or at least to her spirit, in order to be saved; and to-day it is my intention to bring out into fuller light an article of faith, recited in the Creed, which I think is imperfectly known, because it is very rarely explained to the people. It is the Ninth Article of the Apostles' Creed and is contained in these few words: *"I believe in the communion of saints."*

I can not conceal from myself that the subject is a little difficult, but trusting in grace from on high and your kind attention, I hope to make it plain.

When in this Discourse I mention the name of the *Church* none of you of course will fancy that I mean the material edifice in which we are gathered together; you will know that I am speaking of that marvelous society, founded by Jesus Christ, at whose head He placed the Roman Pontiff and his successors; that Church which fills time and space; which preserves without admixture of error and teaches all the doctrines which she received from the lips of Jesus Christ; which begets children to God, makes saints, and here on earth prepares citizens for heaven. The

Church, whose birthday we celebrate to-day, is but a portion of the great Church of Jesus Christ; she is only a part, and by no means the largest part, of the immense society of which He is the natural and everlasting Head. She is, according to the beautiful similitude of the Gospel, like a tree whose roots are sunk deep and fastened in the bowels of the earth, in whose wide-spreading branches the birds of the air find a safe shelter, and whose summit rises to the clouds. The Church is like a great giant, whose feet rest in that kingdom where sorrow is cheered by hope and souls are cleansed and purified, who is engaged in a ceaseless conflict on earth, and whose head is lost among the stars. She is made up of three great armies, one of which is purging away the dust of the battlefield and closing and healing the wounds received in conflict; the second is carrying on an incessant warfare; and the third, having come off victorious from the struggle, is enjoying its triumph. The Church suffering in purgatory, the Church in conflict on earth, and the Church triumphant in heaven, these three armies, of which Jesus Christ is the supreme Head, are united one to the other in a variety of ways and by bonds the most sacred and enduring. In these three great divisions of the Church, which in time will coalesce into one, flows in varying measure, like the blood in the body,

the flood of divine life, which, coming forth from the Head, vivifies, purifies, and makes blessed all the members, and again returns whence it came. Such is the communion of saints in the widest sense of the word. Let us still farther develop this idea.

Consider the smallest particle of matter—the atom. Is it isolated? No, it acts continuously upon all particles of matter without exception, whether near or remote, according to their nature, and is acted upon by them. It may be so small as to be not only imperceptible to sense, but incapable of being verified by the most delicate instrument, but reason, which transcends the instrument, tells us that there is such action and we can not doubt it.

Consider the earth; it is a small planet, whose everlasting circuit is interwoven with that of other planets, smaller than an atom, as compared with the interminable hosts of heavenly bodies swimming through the measureless spaces of the firmament. And yet the earth, this bit of dust rotating in the universe, by the great law of attraction acts upon the most distant nebulæ of the heavens, is acted upon by them and feels their mysterious force. All celestial bodies, all planets, all fixed stars, all the remotest nebulæ that the telescope pursues into the unsearchable depths of the heavens, have relations one with

another, act upon and attract one another, give out and exchange heat and light, and the mysterious influences which they exert and to which they are subject are known to God alone. The celestial bodies are not solitary and isolated; a stupendous communion of relations makes of them one giant family.

Consider a plant. Does it live and thrive and wax strong of itself, without relation to anything round about it? By no means. Its roots absorb from the soil the humors that suit them, it opens its leaves and through them it drinks in sunshine, dew, and air; it inhales what we living beings exhale; it exhales what we inhale, and faithfully gives back to the earth, to the air, and to us what it receives. Its life is a continuous communion with all things near and remote.

Consider man in the less noble part of his nature—the body. His members though distinct from one another have a common life, are wonderfully linked together and mutually aid each other; if one suffers all suffer, if one is well all are well. What a communion among the members of the body!

Consider man in his nobler part—the soul. The soul penetrates the body, makes it to subsist, sends life into every part of it, lights up the eye, speaks with the tongue, hears with the ears, tastes with the palate, toils with the hands, walks with

the feet, and gives entrance to the whole external world through the senses; it is luminous in the intelligence, governs in the will, stores up all things in the memory. Memory, intelligence, and will are bound together, mutually aid and serve each other. The body and the soul clasp in one perpetual embrace, and form but one being, one *Ego,* one *I,* though they are two.

Consider a family, father and mother, brothers and sisters. It forms but one circle and includes within itself the physical, moral, and intellectual life of all; honor, property, love, joy, sorrows, sacrifices, all are a common patrimony; this communion or fellowship unites in one sole individual all the members of the family; it runs back to fathers and grandfathers; it reaches forward to sons and grandsons; it is the source of the honor or dishonor, of the wealth or poverty, of the strength or weakness of families.

Finally, consider a people or a nation, made up of families. The citizens, as if forgetting the individual and looking only to the family, unite their counsel and strength for the common good. The greatness and glory of the fatherland engross their every care and affection; if their country suffers they suffer; if it prospers they, too, are prosperous. Should a foreign army threaten its liberty, they rise as one man and rush to the frontier, ready to shed their blood for the

defense of all. This is solidarity, or communion in the natural order, of the most exalted kind; it is common to all beings considered singly or as a whole; it is a sovereign, invariable, absolute, universal law, without which life would be impossible, progress would cease, and the whole universe would be a tomb.

Now this law, which is the source of life and order, of progress, beauty, and perfection in the physical, intellectual, and moral world, in the individual, in the family, and in the social body, which is born of nature itself, should be seen in all its splendor and magnificence in the great family, in the great people of God, namely, in His Church. The Creator of the universe is also the Founder of the Church, and the supernatural order is fashioned on the natural, according to the sublime phrase of St. Thomas: "*Gratia operatur secundum modum naturæ.*" Communion, then, or fellowship, should be conspicuous in the Church and constitute one of her characteristics and most resplendent glories. The Gospel says this, and St. Paul with holy daring affirms it under a thousand forms and on every page of his incomparable Letters. I will quote a few of his sentences: "We being many are one body. There are many members indeed, yet one body. We are members of one body in Christ. Grace is of God, life everlasting in Christ Jesus our

Lord. Doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him, who is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity."

Contemplate the Church; she has but one heart and one soul; she has but one invisible Head, Jesus Christ, one visible Head, the vicar of Christ, the Supreme Pontiff; by means of bishops and priests, who are as so many tongues and hands, she causes her voice and action to reach to every corner of the world; she draws all to herself and binds her faithful children to her by the ties of filial obedience, firm faith, tender and ardent love. All is moved from one center, and the waves of divine life, gaining force in their progress, go leaping and circling through this well-ordered and measureless body, to return again to their source, as the blood rushes and circulates through the body and returns to the heart, there again to be renewed.

The earth, attracted by an irresistible and unvarying force, follows the sun, as lover follows lover, through the highways of the firmament, and so does the Church, attracted by Jesus Christ, her Spouse, follow Him with the eye of faith and with burning love. She follows Him

and the glorious army of the Church triumphant also follows Him to make up His train. She follows Him, and with immovable and steadfast faith and unquenchable charity blesses Him, adores Him, thanks Him, sings His praises, and magnifies His glory. Hemmed about by enemies and bending under a weight of sorrow, she lifts up her suppliant hands and cries out in an agony of grief, imploring help and comfort both for herself and her erring and afflicted children. And that her prayers may be more acceptable to her Spouse and Head, she turns to His and her friends, to the apostles and martyrs, to the saints and angels, who make up the Church triumphant, begging them to unite their prayers to hers and to become her intercessors.

The Church on earth is a pilgrim sister, still wandering in this land of exile and trial, who begs the aid of another sister that has happily completed her journey and is enriched with every best gift. The Church in heaven makes her own the cause of the Church on earth, and the prayers of both, their praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and entreaties, are mingled in one and go up to the common Head, Jesus Christ, and from thence, like rays of light and refreshing showers, descend upon the earth in choicest graces and favors. And thus between the Church on earth and the Church in heaven is kept up an unintermitted

current, a communion of holy things, a fountain of glory to God and of blessing and life to us all. This action is like the action of the earth that sends up water in mist and cloud towards the sun, to be changed by it and returned in beneficent rains, and by it the earth is flooded with light, penetrated with heat, and made prolific, and radiant with beauty.

The Church, a pilgrim and a wayfarer upon the earth, while keeping her eyes raised on high, where the divine Spouse reigns and her elder sister, the Church triumphant, is enjoying unmixed bliss, listens with pity to the sighs of grief and groans that come up from that dark prison, where countless souls, once her daughters, are being cleansed and made worthy to take their flight to heaven. And though she herself is suffering and, it may be, covered with wounds, she is not deaf to those pitiful cries, and lets fall down into those depths, that lie between her and them, the price of redemption, confident that some day those for whom she now intercedes will become in turn intercessors in her behalf. Thus between the Church in conflict on earth and the Church being purified in purgatory is set up a current of entreaty and succor, of benefits and gratitude, which unites them by ties of supernatural love. We, exiles here below, appeal to the Church in bliss in heaven and receive from

her every manner of aid and blessing; the Church in purgatory appeals to us and we extend to her the hand of sympathy and assistance in the hope that one day those souls, when they become citizens of the heavenly city, will be our powerful patrons.

Such is the beautiful chain that binds together the three armies of the one Church, of which Jesus Christ is the Supreme Head. Such is the wave of divine love, kindled in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that sweeps through the three armies, descends from heaven to earth and from earth on down into the kingdom of sorrow and hope, and thence rises again to earth, and from earth goes up to heaven and returns into the Heart of Jesus, carrying with it in its current angels and souls. It encourages and strengthens some, cleanses and purifies others, and inebriates still others with everlasting delights. Thus the mountain streams run down to the sea, and from the sea through the atmosphere return to the mountains, irrigate and make fertile continents, nourish and develop every form of life; and their ceaseless movement is due to the sun which, ever invariable and motionless, is resplendent in the heavens.

And Protestantism would destroy this harmony, would arrest or deflect this stream of life, shutting up the blessed in heaven, constraining them to live a life of selfish felicity, coercing them to

forget their struggling brethren on earth, forbidding these latter to ask for mercy or succor from the saints above, and, finally eliminating altogether the third army, which is the complement of the other two.

But we must limit our remarks to the consideration of the *communion of saints,* as it exists, and as Christ wills that it shall exist, in the army in conflict, or in our Church on earth. To know in what goods the children of this Church can and should participate, we must know what these goods are, what this splendid heritage is, with which Christ willed that she should be enriched. The treasures which Jesus Christ has poured into the bosom of the Church, and which she will preserve unto the end of time, may, if I mistake not, be summarized under three heads, namely, truth, grace, and merit, the last named being the fruit of truth, of grace, and of good works.

The first gift that Christ has given in perpetuity to the Church is truth, that is, the knowledge, precise and certain, of all the verities that refer to God and to His works, to our origin and our duties toward Him, our neighbor, and ourselves, and to our last end and the means of obtaining it. This treasure of truth comes from Christ, as light comes from the sun; it is lodged and concentrated in His vicar, the Roman Pontiff; it is mirrored forth in the

episcopate; it is diffused through the priesthood, and through all who will open their eyes to see it. Consider the sun when it is high in the heavens; it pours forth an ocean of light of which it is the inexhaustible source. This light permeates the air, floods the earth, its infinite splendors are reflected in the waters of the sea; it clothes forests and meadows and all things animate and inanimate with colors of variegated and dazzling beauty. No creature can wholly escape it; it is reflected in a thousand forms and finds ever new ways to diffuse itself everywhere. This is an image, but a faint image, of the truth with which Christ, by means of the Church, floods the earth. The Head of this Church speaks, and a thousand bishops, a million priests, scattered over the broad face of the world, speak with the same voice; and so also speak masters to pupils and Religious of both sexes, in public and in private and in the tribunal of penance. They speak by word of mouth, through books, symbols, and images, in prayers and canticles. And what do they say? What do they say in every place through the long hours of the day and the watches of the night? They announce the truths taught by Christ and they present them in every possible form. These truths, precisely like light, come down from on high; they are diffused on the right hand and on the left; they are reflected back again

from below; and they penetrate everywhere. All receive the truth and all give it back; they are so many mirrors that multiply its light; every man unconsciously becomes a mirror of truth and aids in its diffusion.

And not alone by word of mouth and by external signs do men in the Church communicate the truth that comes from Christ; they communicate it still more effectually to one another by work and example. If tongue and signs, if books and figures and images, if symbols and rites and worship, are in their way agencies through which the divine truths are put before our eyes and borne in upon our ears, believe me, my friends, these same truths are brought home to us still more abundantly and efficaciously by the good works that are ceaselessly being done in the Church by her children, who by example and imitation augment and spread everywhere the unspeakable benefits of the communion of saints.

Whatever one thinks, whatever he loves or desires, tends of its very nature to find expression in external acts. All virtues are born of thought, they germinate in the will and heart, and then in ways the most diverse they clothe themselves with a body and manifest themselves in external acts. Let us for a moment take a look at the world-wide army of the Church militant. We see within it men and women, laymen and priests,

old and young, and people of all ranks and conditions. What are they doing? Some are gathered together in prayer, others are steadily discharging their duties as faithful husbands and wives, as obedient and docile sons and daughters, as Christian mothers and honest dependants; others consecrate their lives and dedicate their substance to the relief of the poor and the sick, of the destitute and the distressed; others again exercise and exemplify in public and in private, as far as their state and condition permit, all the virtues—prudence, fortitude, and temperance, justice, modesty, and humility, penitence, patience, and charity in all its forms. It is true that in the Church vices are seen to mingle with virtues, as in a meadow thistles are seen growing among flowers; but while the eye notes the thistles, it rests with pleasure only on the flowers.

And we see not only the virtues that in our day are resplendent in the Church, but with the aid of monuments and history we can go back in thought to time past and see those that flourished in her bosom in every age. And what is the effect of this exalting and ennobling spectacle? At sight of virtues so numerous and stupendous, virtues which shine out like diamonds and rubies in the sunlight, we lift up our minds and hearts to Him who is the primary and principal Cause of it all; we acknowledge His power, His great-

ness, and the potency of His grace, and we resolve to do the bidding of Christ, who said: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

The sublime sight of so many exalted virtues teaches us who God is and what the grace of Jesus Christ is; it teaches us also of what supreme efforts and heroic sacrifices the human will is capable and we feel ourselves carried away with a holy ardor and equal to the task of emulating the glorious deeds of our brothers in the Faith. Such is the fruit of the communion of saints; through it not only is faith spread abroad by words and external signs, but at the sight of the achievements of others the flame of emulation and of a holy enthusiasm is kindled within us.

You all know that the force of attraction is directly in proportion to the mass or quantity of matter, and that the power of an electric current is in proportion to the pile or battery from which it is set free; this both science and experience demonstrate. Now the spark that kindles our enthusiasm and inspires us to emulate and imitate others comes from the whole Church, from this giant body whose members are scattered over five continents. Who can measure this accumulated force under its double aspect of time and space?

It has been my privilege more than once to see

thirty or forty thousand persons, bareheaded and in an humble and devout attitude going in procession to some famous shrine or sanctuary. When I saw all that multitude falling on their knees before an image of Our Lord or of His blessed Mother, and heard them, amid clouds of incense, the glow of thousands of torches and the notes of a great organ, lifting up their voices like the roar of thunder in supplication to heaven, I felt a cold shudder running through my veins, my heart stood still, an inexpressible sensation came over me, and unconsciously my eyes filled with tears—I wept and I knew not why; and I saw others, white-haired men, weeping beside me. What had happened? How and why at that very instant did we all feel that God was present, that there was among us all but one thought and one sentiment, and if I may so say, one soul and one heart? What was the cause of this startling phenomenon? There was only one cause: the communion of saints.

But there are still more and greater things to be said. Kindly follow me in what I am to say, for we are entering upon a higher and still more beautiful aspect of our subject. Grace is God's most excellent gift, and, as regards ourselves, it is of two kinds. There is a grace that invests the whole soul, permeates it, transforms it, makes it like to God, makes of it a new creature, an en-

during sharer of the divine nature, and deifies it. As fire invests iron and penetrates it, making it a sharer of its own nature, so does this grace, which is called sanctifying grace, invest and penetrate the soul. But it is not of this grace that I am going to speak. There is another grace that touches and stirs the soul, rouses it and moves it to flee from evil and do good, to turn to God and to seek Him; it is a voice that calls out, a flash that illuminates; it is the breath of God passing over it; it is not a stable but a fleeting grace; it leads on to the acquisition of sanctifying grace and makes the soul operative and energetic; it is given to sinners that they may become righteous, to the righteous that they may grow in righteousness and become daily more acceptable to God. This grace, so necessary and so various in its manifestations, is frequently the fruit of the communion of saints. Here is a dissipated, wayward young man, who has embittered the life of his parents, who has become a rock of scandal to the parish, and who all of a sudden or little by little changes his way of life, becomes docile, respectful, and exemplary. Whence the change? It must be sought in the tears, the prayers which a loving mother and distressed sisters poured out before the altar of God. Here again is a man, who has lived a reckless, scandalous life, lying on a bed of pain from which he will never rise; from

the day of his first holy communion, or at least from the day of his marriage to the present, he has never darkened the door of the Church; and he boasts that he no longer believes anything and that he will die without a priest. Suddenly he calls for the priest, receives the sacraments, and dies in the peace of the Lord. Who has wrought this miracle of grace? A pious daughter who lives in the silence of the cloister, a loving wife, a priest friend, who by prayers and holy communions, by fasts, almsdeeds, and penances and by visits to the Blessed Sacrament, wearied heaven and opened for that obstinate sinner the fountains of mercy. Who can possibly recount all the prodigies of grace that prayer works silently and secretly in the hearts of men? We see the effects, we marvel at them, but the cause is known only to God, and some day we, too, shall know it, when all the mysteries of grace will stand revealed in the fulness of light. The prayers that we offer up to God for one another, that we offer up to saints and angels and to our blessed Mother, and those that angels and saints and our blessed Mother offer up to Christ, start a flood of graces, of holy aspirations, of ardent desires, which bring down upon the whole Church a heavenly virtue that sustains the weak, strengthens the strong, pours the balm of resignation into hearts ulcerated by grief, disarms the wrath of

God and breaks the hearts of sinners. Great God, we adore the abysses of Thy mercy, which through prayer and the communion of saints, by ways impenetrable to our eyes, causes the healing waters of Thy grace to flow everywhere.

And have I now revealed to you the whole of the mystery of the Communion of Saints? By no means. I have but lifted the hem of the garment that conceals it. Still follow me, if you will. To the communion or fellowship of truth through word and deed, to the communion of grace through prayer and all the good works that we offer up to God for one another, must be added the communion of merit.

And how? you will say. Is not merit, the fruit of our prayers and of the good works we do, wholly personal to him who prays and does good works? Certainly *merit* is wholly personal and hence it is written that every one shall receive according to his works; but it is also a truth of faith that there is a communion of merit as well as of truth and grace. I beg you to be attentive, so that you may properly grasp what I am about to say to you, what indeed all implicitly believe but few comprehend.

Sin committed after Baptism carries with it a two-fold punishment; the one *eternal,* which is taken away when sin is repented of and remitted; the other *temporal,* which is expiated either on

this earth by toilsome and painful penitential works or in a future life in purgatory. Now all, or nearly all, good works cost some sacrifice, involve some toil or pain, and on this account beyond the merit that attaches to them they contain a virtue or a power of expiating temporal punishment. It is hardly necessary to remark that every sin is consented to because of the illicit pleasure it gives, and on this account divine justice requires, as a condition of its pardon, a sorrow that is not restricted to the sorrow of the heart, but must have its counterpart in the body; and hence the necessity of expiatory works, of works of penance, which the Gospel enjoins and the Church in special cases specifies. The more trying and painful the works are, the greater is their expiatory virtue. The surplus of merit arising from expiation done for sins that either never existed at all, or, having existed are already expiated, forms an immense stock or treasure, of which the Church is the depository and dispenser, a wealth of spiritual favors of which all may avail themselves.

Would you know the height and the depth and the breadth of this treasure? Listen.

Christ is God and man; His smallest act, His least suffering, has an expiatory virtue that is, rigorously speaking, infinite. Now put together one by one all the sorrows He endured from the

moment He lay a babe upon His Mother's breast, until He breathed His last breath upon the cross, and what a measureless, infinite, aggregate of expiatory virtue we have. Jesus is God-Man and therefore wholly and most innocent; there was not in Him, and could not have been, the faintest shadow of sin. This whole infinite mass of expiatory merit is the dowry of His spouse, the Church, and she, like a generous mother, offers it to all her children who have need of it.

Again: Add to the expiatory merits of Christ the almost infinite merits of His Mother, whose sufferings were so numerous and so intense and who had not even the suggestion of a fault to expiate. To these again add the tears, the griefs, the torments, the blood of millions of martyrs; the penances, the fasts, the austerities, the vigils, the abstinences, the mortifications of solitaries, cenobites, cloistered Religious, and of the countless souls who lived under religious discipline; or who lived in the world, and who, being innocent, had no sins to expiate, or who, if they had few and light ones, had by rigorous penance more than paid the debt, and then compute the enormous amount of expiatory merits, infinitely over and above what divine justice requires; all this is the treasure of the communion of saints and is placed in the hands of the Church. This enormous accumulation of expiatory merits, the great

capital in the treasury of the Church, which goes on increasing day by day, can it, think you, can it remain there profitless and fruitless? God forbid that we should even think so. God, being all goodness and all love, is always giving; Jesus Christ, because He is the God-Man, is always giving and giving to all; the Church, because she is the creation of Christ, made to His image, because she is moved and governed and animated by His spirit, is also always giving and giving abundantly and to all. This capital of expiatory works should circulate through the whole body of the Church as life and blood circulate through the human body; there should not be a vein of this body, no matter how delicate, not an atom, no matter how infinitesimal, that does not receive its share of it. When the waters of a river overflow the open country, they fill all the low places and cover equally the whole surface. So also with the life of the Church. What is superabundant in one flows on to another who is needy; he who has suffered beyond his due gives to him who has suffered less than his due; the one supplies the deficiency of the other.

The justice of God can never be a debtor to man, and if it is found that one has satisfied beyond measure he takes what is over and above and deposits it in the Church to his credit; and the Church with the heart and the authority of a

mother distributes it to her children, who are destitute or in want.

And thus, my friends, is the communion of saints made a reality, thus does the stream of merit flow through the Church militant,.and then passes on to the Church suffering, and when the cleansed souls enter the Church triumphant it again descends from on high upon the Church militant on earth. A wonderful organism, whose life is perpetually renewed by the spirit of Jesus Christ; an organism that gives to all its members according to their needs and capacity, that illuminates and sanctifies those on earth, cleanses and purifies those in purgatory, gladdens and rejoices those in heaven; an organism one and manifold, as is said in Holy Writ, marvelous and faintly typified in those innumerable currents that cross and recross each other in the atmosphere and in the waters of the sea, and that, under the influence of the sun, equally distribute heat, nourish, develop, and perfect every form of life. How simple yet how magnificent are Thy works, O Lord! How is it possible not to avow that Thou art the Creator of the earth and of the Church, of the natural and supernatural order, for the laws that govern the one are the laws that govern the other. In the one as in the other the same hand is ever visible, and the wisdom of the same architect is ever luminous to all.

Before closing this Discourse it will be necessary to study and point out the conditions essential to share in these spiritual goods of the communion of saints.

The conditions vary according to the nature and the quantity of benefits participated in. In order to share in the truth, which by word and work is diffused throughout the Church, and to receive a consequent influx of grace, more or less as the case may be, it is sufficient to hear and see what the Church says and does and to come into some sort of contact with her. In order to share in her life and in the treasure and expiatory virtue of the merits of her divine Head and of her saints, we must be of her members, living of her very life, that is, we must be living in sanctifying grace. Let me make this clear by a similitude.

Civil society never ceases to be; the individual dies but society lives on; the leaves fall from the tree but the tree does not die. Men enter into society by being born into it; they leave it when they die. When they enter into it they share in all the benefits it can give, in its language, its knowledge, and its manners and customs. When they leave it, they leave behind them whatever they have added to its store, their discoveries, their inventions, the creations of their mind and heart, the works of their hands, and their accumu-

lated wealth; all their heritage rests in the society of which they were a part, just as soil and trees, stone and mineral matter, everything that rivers carry down in the current, rests at the bottom of the sea, while their waters evaporate and rise again into the firmament above. Society is a common reservoir in which are stored the labors and the productions of all its members; and it is sufficient to enter it, to pass through it, to keep one's eyes and ears open, to communicate with it materially, in order to gain from it some accession of knowledge and some benefit. One may, without being a resident of a city or a citizen of a country, by simply visiting them and traveling through them, learn much that they can teach and that it will be profitable to him to know. Thus very many who are not children of the city of God, who merely visit her as strangers, or, if you will, who make war upon her and despise her, may, by hearing her teaching, viewing her institutions, contemplating her works, receive some benefit from her, some ray of truth, some attraction to good, some encouragement to virtue, some passing impulse that will call them to God and to Christ. All these, and they are very numerous, share in some measure in the communion of saints, although they are not of its members. They are as birds that remain the whole day long in the depths of the forest, and that even there

receive the reflected rays of the light of the sun and of its heat, that they are seeking to escape; they are as pilgrims, who partake of the hospitality of a home, when they have not, and can not have the right of sons.

My friends, you are aware that in order to have the right to make one's home in a house, to enjoy the benefits of one of the family, and in time to come into the paternal inheritance, one must be a son, either born of lawful wedlock or legally adopted by the father, and must remain with him. Similarly, in order to possess the rights and advantages of a city or of a State, one must be a citizen either of the city or of the State, by having been born there or by having been legally recognized as such, and he must not, through any crime, have forfeited his citizenship. The nature of things requires this, and all human laws sanction it.

Would we share in all the spiritual wealth of which Jesus Christ has made the Church the depository? Would we sit at the holy table of our common Father and in time receive the inheritance of heaven? If so we must belong to His family, we must live in His Church, which is the House of God. Would we share in the privileges, the favors, the rights that belong to the citizens of the heavenly city, of the fatherland and of the kingdom of which Jesus Christ is the Head? If

so we must live continuously in the holy city, we must be always loyal subjects, docile and obedient children of this fatherland, of this blessed kingdom, which is none other than the Catholic, the Apostolic Church of Rome, because she alone has received from her Spouse, Jesus Christ, as her dower, all these inestimable riches, and because in her bosom alone and through her ministration can we share in the communion of saints. When I think of my sins and how wretched I am, my courage fails me and I tremble with fear; but when I reflect that I am a child of the Church, and with the eyes of faith contemplate her measureless riches, which I as her son may freely appropriate to myself, all fear vanishes, my heart is buoyed up, I look confidently up to heaven and in my great joy I cry out: "I believe in the communion of saints."

DISCOURSE X

The Character of the Sacrament of Confirmation

THERE is a point of dogmatic doctrine which has been believed from the beginning, which is imbedded in Sacred Scripture, which is professed by the Christian Churches of the East that are separated from us, which has been solemnly defined by the Sacred Council of Trent, and has been taught to all the faithful, young and old, in the catechism, but of which sacred orators rarely speak. This point of dogmatic teaching is the character which is impressed on the soul in the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, and these sacraments can not in consequence be received a second time. That this character is impressed in the three sacraments named, you who hear me all know and believe—and your children, who have heard the catechism explained, also know and believe. But how often do you hear any mention made of this point of doctrine from the pulpit? Rarely, in fact too rarely, and then you hear only a word or a reference in passing. You are told indeed that these sacraments imprint a character on the soul that can not be effaced and that in consequence they are received only once and for all; but what this

character is, or what it signifies, or what are its effects, or why it is proper to these three sacraments and not to the others, or what duties it imposes—of all this there is not a word said, or at most only a suggestion is made and an inference drawn. And how is this silence to be accounted for; why is so little said on the character of these sacraments, while other truths, less important it may be and not yet defined by the Church, are frequently and exhaustively treated? This is a truth, moreover, that comes home to all of us, men and women, young and old, who have been baptized and confirmed and who bear this character upon our soul. Why, I ask again, why this silence; why in speaking of it do preachers limit themselves to a repetition of the sacred words used by the Council of Trent? Because, I fancy, it is a truth difficult to explain and difficult to understand, and it is easier simply to state it and believe it than to explain it to the people and to give a reason for it. But this is surely not according to the spirit of the Church, which desires and wishes that her children shall, according to their ability, grasp and comprehend the truths they believe. To possess the seed of a tree is something, but it is still better to possess the tree that has grown out of the seed; it is pleasing to look upon the bud in whose heart is enclosed a beautiful flower, but it is still more gratifying

to look upon the flower when it has burst forth from the bud and to enjoy its fragrance. We have all within us this character, this bud of the soul, because it is ours by faith; let us develop it until it comes forth radiant into leaf and flower and diffuses abroad sweetest perfume.

On this solemn day of Pentecost, which commemorates the transformation of the apostles and the miraculous diffusion of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, on this solemn day on which your children are accustomed to receive the sacrament of Confirmation and with it the character of soldiers of Jesus Christ, I trust you will bear with me while I say a few words on the character itself. Now, since Confirmation is in a sense an addition to Baptism and its complement, and since it can not be conferred except by one who is adorned with the priestly character, it follows that these three characters are intimately associated together, the one being respectively the foundation of the other, and we shall therefore inquire, first, What is the nature of the character that is impressed in the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, and especially of the first two; second, What are the practical duties in regard to ourselves arising out of this character? The subject is of its very nature somewhat subtle and elevated and will demand your closest attention.

If I should now turn to any boy or girl of ten years of age listening to me here, who has studied the catechism, and say to either: "Tell me, my child, what is the character that is impressed on the soul in the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders?" Either would at once reply: "It is a spiritual and ineffaceable sign or mark imprinted on the soul of him who receives these sacraments." The answer is perfect, and is just what is found in the catechism and in the definition of the Council of Trent. But if I should go a step further and ask the child: "What is this spiritual and ineffaceable mark imprinted on the soul?" Most likely he would look at me, bow his head and murmur: "I don't know." Nor is this surprising, because to give an answer is beyond his powers, and, if I may say so without offence, I think that very few of you who listen to me could give a satisfactory answer and make clear the nature of the sacramental character. All believe it to be a truth revealed and defined that the sacramental character exists, but how few know ever so imperfectly what this character is; let us then try, in so far as we can by reason illuminated by faith, to understand what we so firmly believe, and if you follow me the subject will not be found so difficult.

Whence do we come? To whom do we belong?

Who is our Lord and Master, our first and supreme Lord, to whom we are subject and to whom we shall be subject for all eternity? He is God. All that we have and shall have, nay, all that we are, is the gift of God, His gift wholly and solely; there is not a fiber of our being, not an atom that is not God's gift; even our very actions, the works that we call our own, we do only in so far as God has given us the power and the strength to do them; and they are therefore in their source His gift. Our entire being, be it what it may, comes from God. No one can require it of Him, no one can demand it, for he who does not exist has no rights, nor can he request them as a favor. The dominion, or the lordship of God over us has no limits; it is absolute, it is perfect, and God Himself, omnipotent as He is, can not abdicate or disclaim it without ceasing to be God. God is our Lord and owner and we are His inalienable property, because He is our creator and we are His creatures. All this is a truth of faith, contained in the first article of the Creed and luminously evident by the light of natural reason alone.

Again; God in the munificence of His bounty added to the gifts of nature the far more noble gifts of grace; by nature we were His servants, by grace He made us His adopted children; He stamped His own likeness upon our souls and

destined us to be blessed as He Himself is blessed. A day came when from this high eminence we were cast down into an abyss of misery; we became His enemies; we disfigured His likeness within us, and of ourselves we were utterly unable to break the bonds of our servitude. But the Word, who by His power had brought us forth out of nothingness and engraved His image upon us, came down even to our lowliness and broke asunder the chains of our slavery, once more engraved His image within us, and, at the cost of His own life, poured a new life into our souls. The Creator became the Redeemer, and to His first title of absolute proprietorship added a second, stronger it may he said, than the first, "You are not your own," says St. Paul, " for you are bought with a great price." And the price was not gold, or silver, or valuable gems, but the blood of the Lamb without spot or blemish.

Nor is this all; not only are we God's because we are the work of His hands, created by Him out of nothing by a pure act of love; not only are we Jesus Christ's, the God-Man, because He repurchased us; we are His by still another and a nobler title. He, the Man-God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, is our Head and we are His members; He is the vine, we are the branches; by the truth with which He illuminates our minds, by the divine grace which He pours into our hearts, we are in-

timately united to Him, we live of His life, we are one with Him; such is the language of Holy Writ. Made conscious of this truth both by reason and by faith, we have cried out to Him hundreds and hundreds of times in the most joyous moments of our lives, when the breath of God was passing silently over our souls, saying: "We are Thine, O Lord, and we wish to be Thine now and always, unto the end of time." There is not one among all you that listen to me, who at least in the freshness of youth and on the day of first holy communion has not felt this cry of the soul welling up unbidden from the heart: "Lord I am Thine, wholly and always Thine."

Very well, then. Now this right of absolute ownership which God has over us and which we have so often and so cheerfully acknowledged, this everlasting right ought to be expressed in some way and made visible by some sign, which will at once prove and attest it.

A shepherd, says a Father of the Church, marks his sheep that they may not be mistaken for another's and that every one may know that they are his;[1] so also do men here and in other countries place their coats of arms or their monograms above the doors of their palaces, on their

[1] Et cuncta animalia per signum ostendunt, sit unumquodque, et eo signaculo vindicatur; sic et anima fidelis, quae veritatis sigillum accepit, stigmata Christi portat. (Clemens Alex.)

equipages, and on the breasts of their servants, and have them engraved upon their most precious and valuable jewels. Kings, emperors, republics, wish to see their arms gleaming upon their banners, upon the breasts of their generals and soldiers, and upon the prows of their vessels, and woe to him who does not respect them. And why? In order that all may see, and recognize, and respect their rights, the rights of ownership, the rights of vested interests, the rights of honor. These arms tell all this in simple and concise language. They say also to those who bear them: "You are not your own; you are soldiers of the king, or of the emperor, or of the republic; you are the sons of your country;" and they say to all those who look upon them: "You know what soldiers these are; respect them and fear them." Jesus Christ does the same. He is our Creator and God, and in creating us He stamped upon our souls, which are the work of His hands, His own image, and upon our bodies the physiognomy which as man He made His own. This was by no means a sacramental character; still it was a figure or type of what later on He would impress upon us. We defaced the beautiful image that had been stamped upon our souls; then the Word Creator made Himself the Word Repairer and ransomed us with the price of His blood. He made us His property a second time; He stamped

our souls in Baptism as His conquest, and put upon them the mark of His ownership, His arms and His character, a sort of divine physiognomy, that of the Man-God, of Christ the Ransomer.

As time goes on he who is baptized grows into consciousness and begins to have a knowledge of himself; he enters upon a field of life and finds himself face to face with formidable enemies; he must bravely battle if he will preserve the treasure received in Baptism, and this son of God by grace and adoption must now become a soldier. Then Jesus Christ, the general-in-chief of the army of the faithful, comes to him and invests him in Confirmation with the insignia of a soldier. The army of the faithful, always drawn up in battle array in the face of terrible enemies, must have officers, both subordinate and supreme, to lead it. Christ chooses some from among the soldiers and makes them subordinate officers, and from these again He chooses others and makes them supreme commanders; and so there are deacons, priests, and bishops. And as monarchs and supreme leaders, in conferring power or authority on inferior and superior officers, give them, together with the symbol of the power conferred, a livery or insignia of office, so does Jesus Christ give to deacons, priests, and bishops their insignia or symbol of authority, or in

other words, He gives them the sacramental character.[1]

But what is this character in itself? Is it a bare name, a sort of new external relation, like that of one who has been created a judge, or a general, or a king, whose soul is unchanged, and who as far as he is personally concerned is the same man he was, and has before the world now only something he had not before? No; for if this were true, nothing would be impressed on the soul, which would be contrary to the solemn definition of the Church.

Are, then, the grace conferred in the sacrament and the character the same? No; because grace may be and is lost, whereas the character can not be lost; and because all the sacraments confer grace, whereas the character belongs only to some of them. We ask again: What is this character in itself, this circumcision of the Christian people, this mark of the soldiers of Jesus Christ, this insignia of the leaders of His army?

We shall take St. Thomas, the prince of theologians, for our guide. The holy Doctor tells us that this character distinguishes or sets apart

[1] The Papacy is not a sacrament and hence has no character. It is only the supreme power of jurisdiction—not a power to confer sacraments; and hence the Pope may resign the Papacy; but he who has received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, or Order can not renounce them, since, because of their ineffaceable character, they can not be gotten rid of.

him who receives it, and is at the same time a real power.[1] Let us explain these two thoughts and we shall have a precise idea of the nature and the character of these three sacraments.

You know that any object whatever is distinguished from all others by certain qualities or properties inherent to it, which make it impossible to mistake it for anything else. Thus the qualities or properties inherent in water, or in fire, or in stone, distinguish these bodies from plants, or animals, or the soil of the earth. Similarly every man is distinguished from every other man chiefly by the form of his countenance, by that whole make-up, which is known as his physiognomy, and which prevents him from being mistaken for others to whom he may bear a most striking resemblance, though he never can be exactly like them. Now what is true in this respect of the objects of sense, is also true of objects which lie beyond the domain of sense, or of the soul. The soul has its specific qualities and properties, which constitute its intellectual and moral physiognomy and set it apart from all other souls. I think that the qualities and properties of the soul are those which are impressed on the countenance and which especially are revealed in the eye, and that these qualities and properties determine the physical physiognomy

[1] P. 3–9–63, art. 2–3.

of every man, so that in the countenance we often read the soul as in a mirror.

And now I call your attention to words which you have either heard or have yourselves uttered hundreds of times, and which may give you an idea of what the sacramental character is. How often in speaking of a man or in hearing others speak of him, you have uttered or heard uttered such expressions as these familiar to you all: "What a beautiful character! What a frank, straightforward, firm, noble, generous character! What a perverse character! He is a man destitute of character!" And so on. What is the meaning of these and similar expressions? What is to be understood by them? They mean and they are intended to convey the idea, that the gifts and moral qualities of a man are summed up and blended together in that whole, which is expressed by the beautiful word, *character*. Character sets a man before you as he is in himself and it differentiates or marks him off from all other men. Character, I repeat, is the physiognomy of the soul, it is its countenance, its specific form. As there is in our soul a natural physiognomy, so may there be and so there is a *supernatural* physiognomy, impressed by God in the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders, and this we call their character. And as the *natural* physiognomy can be changed,

though never totally destroyed, so the divine physiognomy or *sacramental character,* may be dishonored and debased by a guilty life, unworthy a Christian and much more a priest, but it can never be destroyed.

This character is engraven on the soul of a Christian, and it points him out to the angels as a son of God, a soldier, and a priest of Christ; it distinguishes him from the Pagan, the Jew, and the simple layman, even when his life and conduct are as bad as, or worse than, theirs. This character, says a Father of the Church, is luminous in the soul of a Christian; by it angels recognize him and come to his defence; it inspires wicked spirits with reverence and awe; and while it will bring him an increase of glory and dignity in heaven, it will be a source of dishonor and infamy to him in hell. Inasmuch as it is a sign or mark, the sacramental character distinguishes the adopted child of God from one who is not adopted, it distinguishes the soldier and the priest of Christ from the son of God and from the simple faithful, because the character is, as St. Thomas says, a distinction, and the Council of Florence teaches that it is a spiritual sign distinct from other signs.

And now it will be easy to understand why the sacraments that impress a character can be conferred but once. Who writes his signature

twice to the same document or puts his seal to it a second time? What could be gained by adding signature to signature, or seal to seal, or sign to sign? That which is and abides can not be repeated, and the three sacraments, of which we are speaking, by virtue of their character, are and abide perpetually, and they can not therefore be repeated without indignity to the sacraments themselves.

But the character is not only a sign or mark which distinguishes the soul or sets it apart, and which, as we have said, gives it a *supernatural* physiognomy that can not be destroyed; it is also a *superhuman and divine power likewise indestructible,* an emanation of the *supreme power* of Jesus Christ Himself, for as St. Thomas, or rather the Church says, *the character is a spiritual power.*

"All power," says Jesus Christ, "is given Me in heaven and on earth." This needs no proof; we have only to bear in mind that He is God and man. We will speak only of the supreme power which is His as mediator and eternal priest. It is clear, my friends, that the sovereign priestly power of Christ is wholly directed to the divine worship, to establish and regulate that marvelous movement of acts and prayers which go up from earth to heaven and that ceaseless communication of gifts which come down from heaven to earth.

Christ communicates His *priestly* power to all the children of the Church, which is His kingdom, but in a very different measure, according to the character of each of the three sacraments; for, as St. Thomas says, the sacramental characters are but various degrees of participation in the priesthood of Christ; they are like three rays of light, one more dazzling than the other and all issuing forth from Him, the everlasting sun.[1]

The sacramental character is a *force* and a *power,* and a force and a power distinct and different in each sacrament. And first, a few words on the *character* of Baptism.

Both faith and science distinguish two sorts of forces or powers, the one passive or receptive, and the other active or operative. A tree receives a graft, an animal feels pain, while a stone or a piece of gold, the king of metals, can neither receive the one nor feel the other; the ear, while it has the power or faculty of hearing, can not see. These are examples of what is called the *passive* power. A fire burns, man thinks and toils; these are examples of what is called the *active* power. The character which God stamps on the soul is a *force* and a power in both senses,

[1] (Christi) Sacerdotio configurantur fideles, secundum sacramentales characteres, qui nihil aliud sunt quam quaedam participationes Sacerdotii Christi, ab ipso derivatae (p. 3, q. 63, a. 3).

and in the first or passive sense in the following way.

In order that man may rise up to God, unite himself to Him, and live of His very life, he must drink of the living water of grace that comes through the channels of the sacraments; he must receive the Holy Ghost and His gifts; he must feed on the bread of heaven, the adorable body of Jesus Christ; he must, if he has committed any, cleanse away his sins and their stains and make the divine life live again within him; he must, when the time comes, invoke upon himself the benediction of heaven in taking to himself a life-long companion and in becoming the head of a family; and when about to cross the threshold to eternity he must gather all his strength to gain the final battle. Now in order that all the multiform streams of God's grace, which correspond to all the periods and exigencies of life, may flow over the field of the soul, the gate must be open and a channel dug, and the gate and channel, through which the blessed waters of grace come, is the *character* of Baptism.

A man presents himself before a court and demands the inheritance, which, he claims, belongs to him. The court naturally requires that he shall establish and make clear his right to what he claims and prove that his kinship is that which the law prescribes as necessary to secure the in-

heritance. Another invokes the protection of the law, or aspires to a high office; has he a right to either, if he can not prove that he is a citizen of the State of which he makes the request? Now the *character* of Baptism is a holy consanguinity which binds us to Christ and gives us a right to His inheritance; it is a right of citizenship acquired by birth, and it opens to us a way into the Church of God and to the highest offices of His soldiers and ministers; it is the root of all our rights as citizens of the city of Christ or of the Church; it is the foundation stone on which is built the whole structure of the Christian life; it is the point at which the road turns that leads to heaven; it is, as St. Thomas teaches, the initiation into the priesthood of Christ, its first step; it is the power by which the soul is made capable of receiving all other sacred things.

But I believe that the *character* of Baptism is not only a *passive* power, a power to receive sacred things, but that it contains within itself an *active* force or power, which should not be overlooked. The character of Baptism is the mark of a Christian, of an adopted son of God, and at sight of that sign, gleaming upon the forehead, wicked spirits tremble and flee and celestial spirits rush to the defence of the sacred property of their Lord. That sign is an *active* power inas-

much as it inspires respect and infuses terror, as does a flag set upon a fortress and floating in the breeze.

After one is baptized and made a Christian he receives, when prepared, the sacrament of Confirmation, and, as the Church teaches, to the character of adopted son of God is added that of soldier of Christ. If he should have the misfortune to desert from the army in which he is enrolled, he will not lose his sacramental character, that will remain to his shame and infamy; and should he return, it is not renewed, because it has not been effaced by flight and apostasy; the character or work of Christ remains impressed upon the forehead even of a deserter.

Now what is the sign or character impressed in Confirmation? It is not only a sign; it is a force, a new power, not to receive, but to give forth, to do, and to act; it is a second participation of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The life of a Christian is an unintermitted war against the three-fold enemy that you all know; he must defend the truth when it is assailed, whether as held by himself or as held by his brethren; he must defend the treasure of grace and the whole of that sacred patrimony which Jesus Christ has given to His Church and which the Church ceaselessly communicates to her children. He who is confirmed has, in virtue of the sacramental

character, the power and is in duty bound to speak out in defence of the Faith and of all things sacred.[1]

But you will say: "Can not any Christian do this; nay, can not even one who is being instructed in the Faith do it?" Certainly, not only can he do it, but he should, because every one who knows the Faith is in duty bound to defend it, and, according to the beautiful phrase of Tertullian, in the cause of God, and therefore of the Church, every man is a soldier.

But one man's obligation to defend and profess the Faith may differ from another's. Say for instance, that while a battle is raging and a soldier is fighting bravely under the banner, suddenly a simple citizen joins him in defending his colors; or that while an innocent and helpless man is being ill treated by one who is wicked and powerful, simultaneously an official of the law and a stranger come to his rescue; what is the difference between the soldier and the simple citizen, between the official and the stranger? Each has the same object in view, each does a most praiseworthy deed; the soldier and the judge, however, discharge an official duty, to do which they have been formally authorized; while

[1] Confirmatus accipit potestatem publice fidem Christi verbis profitendi quasi ex officio. Confirmatus accipit potestatem ad agendum eo quae pertinet ad pugnam spiritualem contra hostes fidei. (S. Thom., 3, q. 72, ar. 5.)

the simple citizen and the stranger act on their own initiative and from a generous impulse, but without authorization or power from the State. Such is the difference between a defence and a profession of faith made by one who is confirmed and by one who is not; the former, moreover, in virtue of the grace he has received, has within him a special strength which the latter has not.

If the Christian, after being confirmed, rises step by step through the three grades to the fulness of the priesthood, then the character of Christ is completed and shines forth in all its splendor and majesty and we seem to be in the presence of the Eternal Priest Himself. All the *passive* power to receive and all the *active* power to dispense the gifts of Heaven to the faithful have in him fullest scope and exercise. He is a son of God by adoption; he is a soldier of Christ and a warrior; he can both receive and administer all the sacraments; he consecrates the adorable body of Jesus Christ; he sits in the tribunal of penance, judges and absolves or retains; he blesses marriages; he strengthens the dying with the sacred Unction for their passage to eternity; he lays on hands in Confirmation and creates soldiers of Jesus Christ. What more? He, Christ living in the Church, lays on hands and creates the generals of Christ's army; he,

a Father, generates fathers, that is, he creates priests, and not only priests, but bishops, who possess the fulness of the priesthood. In Baptism, by virtue of the sacramental character, he gets power to receive all spiritual gifts, all the sacraments; in Holy Ordination, also in virtue of the sacramental character, he receives power to communicate these gifts to others; by the character of Baptism he prepares a most capacious vessel; by the character of Order he fills it to overflowing; by the character of Baptism he rises up toward heaven to receive light and the divine warmth of grace; by the character of Order he comes down from heaven to earth to spread abroad the light and to diffuse the divine warmth of grace, and thus he accomplishes and completes that double movement of religion, which lifts man up toward God and inclines God toward man, binding both together in an indissoluble bond of charity, which is a daughter of grace and which, in the ordinary economy of things as they are, is inseparable from the sacramental character.

Now that I have explained to you as best I can the nature of the sacramental character, allow me to say a few words on the duties which the character of the two sacraments that you have received imposes upon you. You understand, of course, that in speaking to laymen it will not be necessary or proper to speak of the duties which

the character of Holy Orders imposes upon the ministers of the altar.

The servant has upon his heart the emblem or the crest of his master; a soldier, the arms and symbol of his country; these sensible signs constantly remind him of his rights and duties, and to fail in either or to disgrace and dishonor these insignia would be a reproach to himself and his solemn condemnation.

My friends, you all bear in your souls the device, or the monogram, or the arms of the Lord of heaven; no power on earth or in hell can ever erase that sign or mark which the hand of God has stamped there. "Sons," said St. Paul to those who were first baptized, *"you are sealed.* You are sealed by the Holy Spirit, which is a token of the divine promise. *You are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise."* What says the sign or seal which glows as a gem upon the countenance of your souls? St. Paul tells us; listen to what he says: *" You are not your own."* Whose are you? You are His who created you, who preserves you, to whom you have voluntarily given yourselves hundreds and thousands of times; you are His *who has purchased you with a great price,* with the price of His blood. You are not your own, you are servants of God; servants, do I say? *"You are sons of God."* So says the character you received in Baptism; it proclaims it to earth

and heaven; you are servants, you are sons of God, *you are of Christ.* It is St. Paul who says all this. Therefore Christ has over you the fullest, the most absolute rights of a master, and you have toward Him the fullest, the most absolute duties of servants. Now every right must be respected and, first of all, never forget it, the right of ownership. When another seizes or attempts to seize your houses or your fields, your money or your goods, you indignantly cry out against him, thrust him away, saying: *"It is mine;* I am the owner of it; away with you; you are an usurper and a thief. I respect your rights and property; respect mine."

And you Christians, who are the inviolable and inalienable property of Christ, have you always respected His rights? Do you respect them now? Your body and its senses, your soul and its faculties, your intellect and will, your liberty and memory, all are the gift of God, who created and preserves them; they are His property, His wholly and solely, and they are signed with His ineffaceable mark. O how often, it may be, have you violated His rights, how often have you taken this body and soul and given both over to foul passions and into the power of the evil one, His implacable enemy and yours? It may be that in the delirium of passion, in the intoxication of pride, you have dared to say: "We are free, we

are our own masters, who else is our master?" The sacramental character reproves and condemns you; it tells you that you are God's servants, that you are His, and it pronounces woe upon those who violate His rights.

You are not your own; you are Christ's, who ransomed you; you are His by a double title, first because as God He created you and preserves you; and next, because when you were slaves of the enemy He set you free. The baptismal character says in accents clear and loud: "You are Christ's." Examine your conscience, go through your lives, and what do you find? Alas, it may be that time and again you have turned your back on your Master and Redeemer and preferred instead of Him some miserable creature; it may be that you withdrew your mind and heart from the keeping of Christ, that you polluted the one with error and the other with unclean loves and that you trampled upon and spurned the most sacred rights of Christ. A flame of indignation would leap into your countenance and your cheeks would burn for very shame if another should say to you, and say justly: "You are a thief; you have taken what belongs to another; I see the stolen property in your hands; it is mine; it is stamped with my mark." And could not Christ say to you with still greater reason: "You have stolen what is Mine; you have given over

to My enemies your soul, which I ransomed with My blood. There it is, with the imprint of My character upon it in the hands of My enemy, who is rejoicing over his possession."

Nor is this all. By the baptismal character, and in a way to us inexplicable, the physiognomy of God, and especially of Jesus Christ, is written all over our souls; the outlines, the features of the divine countenance, are visible there, as are the features and outlines of a father upon the countenance of his son, and as is the image of the artist's mind upon his canvas. We are bound to respect, nay more, we are bound to venerate that blessed image, those features of ineffable beauty. Oh, that image of Christ! When we see it chiselled in marble, or engraved on bronze or wood, or painted on canvas, by a master hand, we gaze upon it lovingly and reverently, we kiss it, we press it to our hearts; and should a sacrilegious hand in our presence defile or deface it, or offer it any other indignity, we should feel as if a sword had pierced our very soul; we should be all aflame with indignation, and we should demand that swift punishment be meted out to the one who had offered to so sacred an object so brutal an affront; and will we take our soul, on which Christ has drawn His own portrait, on which His image is engraved by the baptismal character, and mutilate it and heap filth upon it?

And this is precisely what we do whenever we gratify our baser passions and drag our soul through the mire and filth of the flesh. Every father would feel himself mortally offended at seeing another in his presence insult and outrage the portrait of his son; every monarch would summarily punish a subject who should publicly offer an affront to his effigy; how, then, will God punish those who deface and heap dirt upon the image of His Son, which He Himself impressed upon the souls of those who are baptized? On earth that character, that image, will make us known as God's children and draw down upon us His grace and mercy; in hell, if unfortunately we should be lost, it will be a cause of our greater punishment; and in heaven it will bring to us an increase of glory.

By the character of Confirmation we become soldiers of Christ and are clad with His vesture;[1] this character is the weapon of the King whom we serve. What is the first duty of a soldier? Not to bring dishonor on his uniform by any disreputable, base, or unworthy act; never to conceal the fact that he is a soldier, as if he were ashamed of it. A soldier in uniform, under the influence of liquor, staggering along the street,

[1] Obsignatus es: sicut enim militibus sigillum, ita et fidelibus spiritus imponitur (St. John Chrysost.). Character est regis mei (St. Aug. Tract. in Joan. Homil. 3, n. 7).

falling on the pavement, blaspheming and quarreling, is an object of scorn and contempt. The very sight is an outrage upon public sentiment and every one indignantly cries out: "Shame!"

If in the hour of battle a soldier should strip himself of his uniform lest he might be a target for the enemy, his fellow soldiers would brand him as a dastardly coward.

And, my friends, how many Christians unmindful of the dignity and greatness of their supreme General, Jesus Christ, soil with the dust and filth of sin and unbecoming conduct the uniform of the Christian soldier? They dishonor both themselves and Him.

How many Christians to escape being an object of jest, ridicule, and sarcasm, conceal the fact that they are Christians and feign to side with the enemies of the Faith, which they ought openly to profess and fearlessly defend, and, if need be, shed their blood for it! They are cowards and cravens, who desert their colors in the face of the enemy.

The true Christian soldier never dishonors this uniform, neither does he conceal it nor leave it off from fear of the enemy; on the contrary, he wears it openly and takes a holy pride in it. Whether in Church or out of it, in public or in private, among friends or enemies, he fearlessly discharges all his Christian and religious duties;

he is seen at public devotions, he goes to the sacraments, he joins in solemn processions in honor of the Blessed Sacrament, and he is indifferent to what others may think or say about him, to their sneers and jibes. In his presence others would hardly dare to speak an immodest word or to assail the Faith, and if they should he does not remain silent, nor does he dissemble, but mindful of his character of soldier of Christ, he fearlessly defends his faith and the honor of his name. He utterly disregards the opinions of men and what is called human respect, and upon his brow are written the sublime words of the Apostle: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel."

DISCOURSE XI

The Undertaking of the Apostles as Judged by Human Reason

THERE is a *material* world and a *moral* world, and both in their inmost nature are *invisible,* as all forces are in their origin invisible. Both become visible in their phenomena or external manifestations. Each of these worlds is subject to laws proper to itself, but between the laws governing each there is a marked difference. The manifestations or phenomena of the *material* world are always subject to unvarying laws; while the manifestations or phenomena of the *moral* world are largely dependent upon the will of man. Now as in the *material* world God, the First Cause of all things, can change, or suspend, or modify its laws and phenomena, and instead of these laws substitute His own omnipotent will and produce those effects, which are known as *miracles,* so in the *moral* world He can directly intervene by His action to elevate the powers of the soul and to give them a turn and direction different from that which otherwise they would have taken, and thus enable them to produce effects beyond their nature to produce, which we are forced to call *miracles* in the *moral* order.

It will undoubtedly be more difficult to distin-

guish and determine the immediate action of God in the *moral* world than in the *material,* inasmuch as the latter falls under the senses and is subject to unchangeable laws, while the former does not fall directly under the senses and is in a great measure the arbiter of its own acts. But in the *moral* world there may always be acts that evidently transcend their own powers, and which we may and should classify as *miracles.* Thus when we see the sight of a man born blind instantaneously restored, we must, no matter what skeptical science may say to the contrary, cry out: "A miracle, a miracle!" Similarly when we see men who are weak, ignorant, and timid, become in an instant strong, learned, and intrepid, we must cry out: "The finger of God is here." The laws of the moral world have been changed and God alone is able to change them.

Now, to-day the Church is celebrating the coming of the Holy Ghost and the transformation of the apostles, who in their turn undertake the *intellectual* and *moral* transformation of the entire world. Here, then, there is question of a phenomenon, of a profound and sudden change, wholly interior, in the minds of the apostles, the external manifestation of which is the unheard-of undertaking which on this day they set about accomplishing. This is none other than the transformation of the world, the establishing

of the kingdom of Christ, which commenced on the day of Pentecost, and which is still going on under our own eyes; and, I ask, is it human or superhuman? Is such an enterprise within the powers of man, or does it transcend them? What answer does reason give? Let us subject this great fact of the conversion of the world and of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ to the severest rules of criticism, and we shall be convinced that it is wholly impossible to explain it as an effect of the natural powers of men, and that, in consequence, if we will be reasonable, we must recognize in it the hand of God. And now for the proof of the statement.

Let us go back through the cycles of time and take our place by the side of the apostles when, gathered together in the Cenacle and filled with the Holy Ghost, they were about to set out to execute the command of their divine Master, "Go, teach all nations." At that moment two thoughts must have come unbidden to the minds of that handful of men, namely, first, the project of converting the world to a new religion and of founding the kingdom of Christ; and, next, the means by which this project was to be carried into effect. Now I deliberately affirm that the apostles, in view of such a gigantic enterprise as this and of the absolute absence of the human means neces-

sary to accomplish it, should, if they had a grain of common-sense, have put from them the very thought of it, for if there was ever on this earth an impossible, crazy venture it was that to which they were about to put their hands. I beg you to follow me attentively.

First of all, note this observation, very simple in itself but very important. A most striking characteristic of Jewish legislation is this, that it absolutely isolated the Jewish people from all other nations. They entered into no treaties with other peoples, they had no intercourse with them, did not intermarry with them, had nothing in common with them. The expected Messias was to come only for the people of Israel, to communicate with the Gentiles was a crime. Probably there never lived on this earth a more exclusive people than the Jews. It is apparent from the Gospel that Our Lord Himself respected this ferocious intolerance of the Hebrew people. How, then, did it happen that the apostles, who had grown up among the Jews, who had in common with them the most violent prejudices, who believed, as they did, that the blessings of the truth should be confined to Israel alone and that it was a sin and a crime to share with the Gentiles the promises of Abraham, how did it happen, I say, that their sympathies and ideas, which hitherto had been so restricted, should suddenly be so en-

larged and that they should take it into their heads to found a universal kingdom that was to extend over all the earth? How did they bring themselves to lay aside prejudices which they had drunk in with their mothers' milk? This one fact proves to us how profoundly and inexplicably these men were changed. But let us pass on to another observation.

We are dealing with the age of Tiberius and Caligula, of Claudius and Nero. What were the ideas prevalent in that age concerning God, the primary foundation of all religion and morality? There was no clear and fixed notion among the multitude concerning God, His unity, His spiritual, unchangeable, and eternal nature, and His perfections. A few philosophers possessed a gleam of truth, but it was feeble, uncertain, and mingled with grossest errors. A swarm of profligate deities, worse than the worst of men, filled the temples and received the adoration of all from the emperors down to the least of their subjects. The entire Greek and Roman world was on its knees before idols.

In the upper classes there was doubt and the most loathsome materialism. As regards morality, nothing more base and degrading could be conceived. True, in the higher ranks of society there were here and there faint traces of a proud stoic morality; but among the common people

and plebeians there was no fixed and recognized moral code, the sole law being instinct and passion, and they knew nothing of a future life. The Pagan religion was everywhere little else than certain external and sometimes obscure acts of worship; it was not a clear and precise body of doctrine treating of God, of the soul, of morality, and of a life to come. On the one side there were a few of the world's favorites who were sunk in the filth of all the pleasures of sense; and on the other an immense multitude, without liberty or rights, utterly defenceless, who wallowed in still lower depths of iniquity and knew nothing either of their origin or of their destiny. And above both these was an absolute power; and the incarnation of this power were the wickedest of men, whose will was law, who held in their hands the destinies of the world, and who, being at the same time supreme heads of the empire and supreme pontiffs, tyrannized over both the bodies and the consciences of men.

Now the apostles must have had at least an imperfect knowledge of this Pagan world, and an intimate knowledge of the Hebrew world; and on both of these they were about to make war, both of these they proposed to transform. Let us grant, if you will, that they were wholly ignorant of worldly affairs; still they could not help feeling the infinite audacity of their design to change

the Jewish and the Pagan religions, and to substitute in their place the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to establish it all over the earth and to find an entrance for it into the minds and hearts of men. No conqueror, even in the delirium of his pride or in the intoxication of victory, had ever dreamed of establishing such an empire over, I will not say the souls, but even the bodies of men as that which the apostles now proposed to themselves. Cicero says in one place that only a madman could cherish the idea of obtaining the assent of all minds to a certain number of truths, or of uniting in one all the peoples of the earth, differing, as they do, in language, laws, manners, and customs, and he said the truth. And this is precisely what these poor Galileans, who had lived their whole lives on the shores of the Lake of Tiberias, at the foot of Mount Libanus, had been charged by Jesus Christ to do and which they now set about accomplishing.

Again: These poor Galileans, who had been born and who had grown up to manhood in an obscure corner of Palestine, could not help realizing the incredible difficulty attending their enterprise; the difficulty of learning the language of the peoples to whom they were to preach the Gospel; the difficulty of acquiring a knowledge of their laws, manners, customs, and religious beliefs, of their errors and superstitions, and of that inde-

finable aggregate of conditions that constitutes the character of peoples; the difficulty of making long journeys, full of all sorts of danger, always alone, without solace or comfort, without companions or friends, among hostile and ferocious peoples, who hated and despised foreigners, and, more than any others, those of Jewish descent; and lastly the difficulty and danger of living in a climate different from their own and one often a certain menace to their health.

True, their ignorance might conceal from the apostles many of these difficulties or it might lessen them, and make them more venturesome; but it might also augment them and fill these Galileans with dread, as ignorance frequently does. By a natural freak of fancy whatever is unknown is strangely magnified, and the mission, upon which on that day the apostles were setting out, was certainly unknown, and the recent tragedy of Calvary must have served to make it seem still more formidable and awe-inspiring.

These poor Galileans had still vividly before their eyes the frightful end of their adored Master. He had confronted the Jewish priesthood and had attempted to found the new Religion; He was a prophet and a worker of miracles; He was powerful in word and work; He was the greatest of saints; He drew after Him crowds fired with a holy enthusiasm; and if so, what

would be their fate, who were so incomparably His inferiors? If Jesus, their divine Master, had in Jerusalem and in the midst of His own countrymen been crushed under the weight of His undertaking, what fate could they look forward to in that same Jerusalem and in the Pagan world? Between the teaching of Christ and that of the Synagogue there was the same relation that exists between the seed and the full-grown plant, between a sketch and a finished picture, between the type and the antitype, and yet the Synagogue executed the Master upon the cross; what, then, could they expect from the Pagan world between whose teaching and the doctrine of Christ there was only on some few points a distant affinity? If the work of Christ had humanly speaking failed in Judea, why should it not much more surely fail in Greece, in Italy, and in the Gentile world?

Again: These poor Galileans saw themselves face to face with two most formidable enemies, two giants, namely, Judaism and imperial Rome, the latter being the incarnation of every form of Paganism, being one with it, its natural protector, and most interested defender. Could they hope to come off victorious in a conflict with the Synagogue, around which were gathered the memories and traditions of the past, which possessed the powerful organization of the priesthood, the glory

of the prophets, of the Law, and of the Temple, the reverence of the people and the protection of Rome? It would have been madness to think so.

And what is to be said of the vast colossus of the Roman Empire, which held in subjugation to its eagles the peoples from the Thames to the Nile, from the Euphrates to the Tagus, and from the Baltic Sea to the desert of Sahara? Paganism and its spirit had entered into the very marrow and into the inmost fiber of society; from the cradle to the tomb man was under its baneful influence; his every act, whether in public or in private, in the forum or beneath the domestic roof, in the army or in the temple, in the school, in the theater, in the fleet, at play—everywhere and everything—was saturated with the spirit of Paganism, everything was consecrated by some rite or sacrifice, everything was divinized—water, air, light, stars, darkness, trees, and even diseases and passions, everything was god except the true God. This religion had an army of priests, attached to it by inveterate habit and ties of interest; the people had been born in it, they had grown up in it, they considered it the glory of their country and a precious family heritage left them by their forefathers, which it was a duty to defend and honor, and a crime to forsake or allow to be touched.

Again: This religion, which was so identified

with the people and with the history of the past, which was for many reasons so dear to them and withal so convenient and pleasant, was placed under the protection of the laws of the Empire, and was so interwoven with them and so permeated by them that it was impossible to separate one from the other, and an affront offered to one was an affront offered to both.

Art, letters, science had surrounded the Pagan religion with a splendor and glory the like of which had never been seen before or since. Painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry in all its diversified forms, history, philosophy, eloquence, were all impregnated with Paganism, reflected its spirit, warmed and vivified it, and were its very soul.

Again: We know how jealous all peoples are of their glory and how proudly patriotic, and certainly none were ever more so than the Greeks and Romans. Their glory and their greatness were gifts from heaven; they were benefits and rewards that came to them through their religion and which their deities bestowed upon them. How, then, could any one say to them: "Your religion is a lie; your fathers have been the victims of this lie; so also are your deities liars; pull them down and set up in their stead Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you nailed to the cross as an impostor and a rebel"?

And there was still another difficulty that should have terrified the apostles when they thought about entering upon this desperate enterprise. They were about to separate from one another and to scatter to the four ends of the earth. Before doing so they must fix up a body of doctrine, theoretical and practical, to be preached to the people, and they must do so in such a way that all should always and everywhere preserve it inviolate, that any sort of contradiction should be absolutely impossible, that all should remain united to one another and to their Head, that they should be always one and unanimous in defending their doctrine and their authority against assaults made upon them. Was all this possible to the apostles considered as men? I leave the answer to your common-sense.

Now summing up what has been thus far said, I doubt not you will agree with me that the apostles, finding themselves in the presence of difficulties so insuperable, which they must in a measure have foreseen and confusedly appreciated, of the sufferings and contumely, persecutions and death, which necessarily awaited them, would have at once relinquished an undertaking which must necessarily fail. But instead what did those timid Galileans do? All without a single exception cried out with one voice: "We shall separate, we shall traverse the whole earth, we shall

preach Jesus Christ everywhere and to all, we shall bring to His feet the whole Pagan world, we shall succeed in our understanding, cost what it may—life, honor, everything we have."

Now let me ask: How do you explain this immovable firmness, this marvelous constancy, of the apostles in carrying out their purpose to convert the world to Christ in the presence of the manifest impossibility of the undertaking? Were they all deluded, all crazy; were they, the whole twelve of them, deluded and crazy, not only for a while, but during a whole lifetime? Assuredly not; their life and work, the undertaking they successfully accomplished, all bear witness that they knew well what they wanted to do and knew how to do it. I ask again, then, how could those timid men, and that they were timid and cowardly is clear from the Gospel, how could they, if they had a grain of sense, undertake a work which everything told them was foolish and wholly impossible? If we would explain this fact we must suppose that there was in those men a strength, a light, a persuasion, that could not have come from themselves, and that therefore must have come from on high, from Him who sent them, from Jesus Christ. But how could they have placed so much confidence in the word of Jesus Christ if they were not certain of His mission and of His divine power? And how could

they have had so firm a faith in Him if they were not certain of the miracles wrought by Him? The purpose, then, of the apostles to convert the world can not be conceived as possible unless we take it for granted that they had the most unfaltering faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

And now, my friends, let us go on a step farther. The design of the apostles, considering the insurmountable obstacles that lay in their way, would be inexplicable unless we presupposed that they were possessed of the fullest faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the proofs by which that faith was sustained. Still the apostles could not be content alone with viewing the difficulties that arose out of the undertaking as such; they had also to consider the means at hand with which to begin it and carry it on.

Now what are the human means, which are regarded as necessary in order to gain the multitude and make men one's followers?[1] They are gold, power, and knowledge. We read of men who by means of gold conquered peoples, ascended thrones, and carried forward to success enterprises which seem to us marvelous. But could the apostles count on gold? They were all poor,

[1] There is a fourth means of gaining the people, namely, virtue and sanctity. But this is not a human means and the apostles possessed it. I do not refer to it, because it merges into the miraculous, which is what I have undertaken to prove in this Discourse.

they lived on alms or by the labor of their hands. Christ in sending them forth said: "Go; do not possess gold, nor money, nor silver in your purses." They never asked for it, they did not care for it, they despised it. Had the apostles armies to do their bidding? Could they hope to have them? Did they have recourse to arms? No, they neither had armies, nor could they hope to have them; and they earnestly protested that their only arms were spiritual arms, prayer, the word of God, and the cross. Did they put their trust in human learning? in dialectical skill, and the charm of eloquence? They protested before the world that their only knowledge was the knowledge of Christ and Christ crucified, that their speech was crude and despicable; and their writings attest the truth of their avowal. Hence they relied neither on gold nor on power, nor on the protection of the mighty, nor on the favor of princes, nor on human learning. What, then, were the means that they were to use to carry to a successful issue a work, the like of which had never been attempted before nor since? Here they are in a few words: "Preach to all. Teach all nations. Freely have you received, freely give." And what were they to teach? Whatever they had heard from the lips of Jesus Christ. And where? Everywhere. And for how long? Until the end of time. Who was to sustain them

in this stupendous and forlorn enterprise? "I shall," said Christ, "be with you always, even to the end of the world."

Now, my friends, you will note that, putting aside the interior aids that Christ would supply, all the means with which the apostles were furnished are reduced to one: "Preach, teach. Preach Jesus Christ; tell every one without distinction that a babe was conceived of a poor virgin in a village of Galilee; that this babe was born in a stable and called Jesus; that He did not own a foot of land, that He lived by the sweat of His brow, that He died nailed to a cross as the most guilty of malefactors, that then He raised Himself to life again, that He was God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Saviour of the world, in whom all must believe, in whom all must hope, whom all must love with a supreme love."

To preach Jesus Christ crucified and His doctrine! And what was that doctrine? There was a dogmatic doctrine concerning God and His inner life; concerning the origin of all things; concerning the origin of man, his primitive history; a doctrine that condemned all other religions, that proscribed all the theories of philosophers, that made faith, absolute and the same for all, the basis of the new teaching. Next, there was a moral doctrine, mostly, if not wholly new, but certainly new in this, that it was a higher and

more perfect morality than had ever been known before; a doctrine that made merciless war upon the passions, that bade the proud be humble, the glutton be temperate, the voluptuous be chaste, the irascible be meek, the slothful be industrious, the avaricious and envious be charitable; which proclaimed that before God the slave was the equal of Cæsar, that all must pardon offences and love their enemies and persecutors with a sincere love that is proved by works; that sins, not only in deeds, but in word, thought, and desire, are punished, and that the whole law is summed up in this great law: "Thou shalt love God above all things and thy neighbor as thyself," and that he who transgresses shall be eternally punished.

These were the means, these the teachings, that were to overcome the world and bring it to the feet of Christ crucified. When we repeat these truths, when we hear them, we do not feel their full force, nor do we realize all the repugnance which they rouse in the heart of a natural man, so accustomed has the mind and ear become to them during a long course of years; but I beg you to go back through all the centuries that lie between us and the day of Pentecost and realize how they presented themselves to the apostles at that solemn moment when they went forth from the Cenacle. I repeat, that the apostles, in flinging themselves into the conflict and beginning the in-

tellectual and moral conquest of the world, must have been either senseless or crazy in the strictest sense of these words, or they must have been borne up by divine power and led on by a supernatural light that made them absolutely certain that He, who sent them, was, as He said He was, God. You will agree with me that the first hypothesis is too absurd to be entertained, and the facts prove it to be so; and hence there remains only the second, namely, that the apostles were certain of the success of their enterprise, because they were certain that Christ was God, and they were certain that He was God, because they had seen the proofs of it; they had touched them with their hands, and the past was a surety for the future. If I mistake not, this argument does not admit of the shadow of a doubt.

The design which the apostles had conceived of converting the world was in itself impossible; it was still more impossible, if we consider the means they had wherewith to accomplish it; still this is precisely what they had resolved to do and they set about doing it with a certainty and a determination of will equaled only by the impossibility of the design itself. And herein clearly appears, even prescinding from the actual work of carrying out the design, a supernatural principle and a supernatural power. What, then, is to be said of the achievement by which this design, that

any man would have pronounced impossible and contrary to all the previsions of human prudence, was accomplished?

On Pentecost day the apostles entered upon the tremendous duel with Judaism, with Paganism personified in the Roman Empire, with human science, in a word with the whole ancient world, religious, political, civil, scientific, artistic, literary, and moral; they fell one by one, others took up the heritage of blood and fearlessly carried on the struggle; they, too, fell, but the ranks were again soon filled up, and so the conflict went on in the east and west, in the north and south, in cities and villages, in schools and temples, in the streets and in the open country, until at the end of three centuries the ancient world fell with an awful crash, the Christian rose upon its ruins, and Constantine sat upon the throne of Nero.

The apostles had achieved a complete victory, and that without once having had recourse to arms, without having compromised a single point of doctrine, without having taken a single step backward. Has the world seen a victory, humanly speaking, more impossible than this, one more stubbornly contested, and one more gloriously achieved?

I am quite well aware, my friends, that modern science has left nothing undone to deny, or, failing in this, to belittle this great fact, this great

miracle, and did time permit it would be at once an easy and a pleasing task to examine their arguments. I shall touch on only two or three of them and from these you will be able to judge of the character of the others.

Did not Paganism, it is urged, spread over the earth more rapidly and more widely than Christianity? Were not Buddhism and Mussulmanism and finally Protestantism propagated in a very short time and to an incredible extent?

Who would ever dream of thinking that the hand of God is visible in the diffusion of these religions, or that that diffusion was miraculous?

The difficulty is one that scarcely deserves an answer. There were no obstacles to the diffusion of Paganism and there could be none; it did not make war on the passions, on the contrary, it encouraged them; it did not say to man: "Deny thyself," but, "Gratify your desires." The descent is easy for the waters that rush down the mountain-side and run on to the sea; but try to make the rivers turn back to their source, and no power is equal to it. Paganism allowed the rivers to flow down the declivity, Christianity forced them back to the heights in which they had their source. And whoever opposed Paganism until Christianity grappled with it and pulled it down?

It should be borne in mind that Paganism was not, properly speaking, one single religion; it

varied according to time and place, according to the country in which it was prevalent and the men who professed it. Paganism on the banks of the Nile was quite different from Paganism on the banks of the Tiber and of the Rhine; it was in fact but a worship of the passions, varying in name and form according to individual taste. Christianity is one body of doctrine, one code of law, embodied in a priesthood which preserves both and interprets them, and they are always the same at all times and in all places.

Buddhism and Mussulmanism were born of imposture and nurtured in ignorance; they flattered the passions and covered the world with ruin, and the sword was the instrument of their apostolate. In what countries did they spread? In countries either wholly or semi-barbarous, among peoples unable to defend themselves either by force or by reason, while Christianity set up its tents in the civilized world, in the Greek and Roman world, and in these its roots are still more firmly fixed than ever.

Protestantism spread rapidly during the first century of its existence; but from that time on it has kept within the narrow limits within which it is at present confined, and where as a religion it goes on disintegrating and splitting up into an infinity of sects. Its expansion is now at an end. And how was it established? Was it established

in the name of Calvin, Luther, Zwinglius, and Henry VIII? No, but in the name of Christ, whose pure and holy doctrine, vitiated by man, they professed to wish to reform. Protestantism was not, strictly speaking, a new religion; it was the old religion amplified; it took from the old much of what was irksome and a trial to human nature, and it may be really considered as a long step toward Paganism. It would be tiresome to recount the means and the artifices to which Protestantism had recourse and to which it owed its diffusion. History has now done this subject ample justice.

I am aware that men, even learned men, affirm that the rapid propagation of Christianity was due to the terrible persecution of it by the Pagan emperors, which produced a reaction in its favor, and to the laws that later on Constantine and other Christian emperors of the first centuries enacted against Paganism.

I have purposely coupled these two objections together, because the one destroys the other, and both illustrate how little it costs certain reasoners to contradict themselves.

So the bloody persecution of the first centuries produced a reaction and to this reaction was due the triumph of Christianity. Why, then, did not the laws published later on by Christian emperors against Paganism cause a reaction in its favor

and make it victorious over Christianity? If persecutions produced a reaction in favor of the persecuted, why do not laws passed to tolerate and favor them abolish them? Who ever heard a more manifest contradiction than this? Hereafter when a State wishes to extirpate a sect and abolish its teaching it will only have to favor it; and if it wishes a sect to prosper it will only have to persecute it. If you would have a tree to grow up strong and vigorous, pull it up by the roots; if you would have it wither up and die, tend it carefully and cultivate it.

Would you know, others say, why Christianity spread so widely and so rapidly in the Greek and Roman world? Because the ground had been prepared by science; its diffusion was but an evolution wholly natural and spontaneous. The philosophy of Plato and of the Stoics had prepared the way and skepticism had created a void in the minds of men, that Christianity came just in time to fill.

Why, then, did the Greek and Roman world, so opportunely prepared by Platonic and Stoic philosophy for the reception of Christianity prove its most formidable foe? Why, then, did the Greek and Roman world rise up as one man and for three centuries leave no means untried to murder Christianity? Why did emperors, senators, proconsuls, armed with all the power of the

law and having legions ready to do their will, shed the blood of Christians in torrents? Why did the rabble rise up against the Christians and yell out: "To the lions with the Christians, to the rivers with the Christians"?

My friends, it is not worth the trouble to examine and refute such sophisms. They will not stand the test of common-sense.

Let me make an end by repeating the truth with which I started out: The design of the apostles to convert the world, considered in itself and in relation to the means they had at hand, and which was accomplished in the course of three or four centuries, was evidently, humanly speaking an undertaking wholly impossible; it was therefore not a human work, and if not, it was the work of God. Let us bow reverently before Him, who alone was its Author.

DISCOURSE XII

The Apostolate of the Catholic Church

THE solemn feast which we are celebrating calls to mind the memorable day when the apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost and marvelously transformed, went forth into the squares and streets of Jerusalem and for the first time announced to all the people the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It calls to mind that memorable day when the apostles, obeying the words of Christ, "Go, teach all nations," commenced their mission and founded the first Church. That day will be memorable as long as the sun shines in the heavens, because then was begun that work the like of which never entered into the mind of man; that work which has come down through all the centuries since, which to-day under our own eyes is spreading into all the countries of the earth and which will continue until the end of time, that is, until all peoples are converted and the kingdom of Christ is everywhere established. Nineteen hundred years ago a band of twelve men, all poor and nearly all fishermen of Galilee, went forth from a house in Jerusalem, and in the name of their Master, who had been crucified and who had risen from the dead fifty days before, said: "We shall conquer the world and bring it to the

feet of the Master." My friends, what would you have said had you been listening to them making this announcement? Be honest; would you not have shrugged your shoulders and compassionated those poor fishermen as men who were deluded, as fanatics and madmen, and humanly speaking you would have been right. Nineteen centuries have gone by, centuries filled with all the infinite vicissitudes that can be crowded into so many ages, and what about those twelve fishermen? What has become of the giant and mad enterprise that they undertook? What do we see to-day, the anniversary of that memorable day nineteen centuries ago? The twelve apostles who went forth from the Cenacle have grown to be a thousand; their Head, after a line of two hundred and sixty-four successors, still sits in the Vatican, venerated by all the civilized world; the three thousand believers of that day have become more than two hundred and fifty millions; and the Church, that had her birth in Jerusalem, raises her triumphant standard aloft in five continents and her voice resounds in every corner of the globe. This fact, which is before us, which is evident and undeniable, proves that those twelve fishermen were neither deluded, nor fanatics, nor madmen, but that they had a clear conception of what they were doing and knew perfectly well who He was who sent them to do it.

The conversion of the world, begun by the apostles on the day of Pentecost, went steadily forward through the labors of their successors and more than ever before is going forward at this day, and there is no more useful or pleasant task, and none more comforting to our faith than in thought to follow them as they go on struggling and conquering. Fancy for a moment that our army should cross the frontiers of a foreign and hostile country and enter it as a conqueror. What would we do? Would we not day by day and hour by hour seek news of its progress; would we not wish to know its movements, the places it occupies, the battles it is fighting, the perils it encounters, and on the first announcement of a victory won, or a city captured, or a province occupied, would not a shout of uncontrollable joy break forth from our hearts and lips?

So, my friends, have we Catholics in belief an army of intrepid and valiant soldiers, scattered over all the countries of the world, our brothers in the Faith and some of them our countrymen, combating error, enduring hunger and thirst, encountering the greatest perils, toiling, suffering, and dying in their efforts to conquer provinces for the Church and for Jesus Christ, our everlasting king. It is but a natural and a holy desire that we should wish to know the conditions of our brothers now struggling for the

Faith and for Jesus Christ, and to learn of the victories they have won and of the hopes they entertain of future triumphs. This is what I propose doing this morning; I propose to set before you in a few rapid sketches the state of the Catholic missions throughout the whole world, for these are but the continuation of the work of the apostles, and now, as then, Jesus Christ is the Head of this work and its Creator. You will learn of the strength and divine fecundity of the Church, and you will see that after nineteen hundred years she has not grown old, but is as full of life as on the day when she came forth from the Cenacle, and seeing this your faith will be invigorated and you will realize that the future is undoubtedly hers.

Of course you will not expect me to give you a history of the missions or of the Catholic apostolate; this would be impossible in a single discourse, for that story is an epic unparalleled in the annals of the human race. My task will be to give you the most concise sketch possible, in which, as in a picture, the general outline of the work of the missions as they are at this day will appear. To trace this sketch which will be at best imperfect, I must, as it were, make a rapid journey through the Old World and the New.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century schism and heresy obliterated in a sea of blood

the hierarchies of England, Scotland, and Holland. The heads of Catholics, both Religious and lay, by thousands and thousands rolled in the dust, severed by the axe of the executioner; cardinals and queens perished upon the scaffold; the fortunate were those, who to escape prison and the sword, succeeded in fleeing and living as exiles in a foreign land. It would seem that a delirium of blood and slaughter took possession alike of the minds of rulers and of those who were renegades to the Church. Woe to the priest who celebrated Holy Mass on English soil! The fines were enormous and the halter was in constant demand. Little by little this madness abated; that land, so fiercely hostile to the Catholic name, gave hospitality to the priests banished from France during the revolution; and as these became missioners in the land of their exile, the great nation began slowly to return to the Catholic Church, its ancient Mother. Churches sprang up, houses of Religious were opened, seminaries founded, and in the shadow of liberty, through the exertions of the great Pius IX and Leo XIII, the hierarchy was again established and is now flourishing there and spreading everywhere its beneficent influence.

Only a few years ago Cardinal Manning,[1] clad in his magnificent purple, walked unmolested

[1] The Italian edition was published in 1895.—Tr.

through the streets of London; he brought about an understanding between the workmen and their employers, and at public meetings, pleading the cause of the poor, he sat side by side with the hereditary prince. The Queen of the Seas is being borne toward the Rome of the Popes and is becoming once more the Island of Saints. The sons of the Catholic Church, respected by all, sit in the halls of the legislature, in the cabinets of ministers, and have often had committed to them the government of a hundred and twenty millions of subjects in India. What a glorious conquest of the Catholic apostolate![1]

Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, which seemed the incontestable prey of heresy, are to-day turning their eyes toward Rome and beginning to feel a secret longing to return to the old Catholic communion from which they were torn in a moment of anger and rashness. During these latter years we have seen a Catholic bishop draw crowds to hear him while he boldly told them that the true Church of Christ is the Catholic Church, the Church of Rome, and that only in her is salvation to be found. Through the labors of the Catholic

[1] The Popes Paul IV and Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth; and only four years ago Leo XIII sent a solemn embassy to London to congratulate Queen Victoria on the fiftieth anniversary of her reign, and his representatives were received with royal splendor. How times have changed! How the breath of freedom is felt everywhere, calming passions and preparing the way to the brotherhood of peoples!

apostolate even in those cold regions the dawn of truth is luminous in the heavens.

The barbaric invasions, the wretched Greek schism, often renewed, and Mohammedanism, which like a sea of burning lava covered a great part of the three ancient continents, seemed to have suffocated all faith in those fertile and vast countries, that extended along the shores of the lower Danube, stretch out on both sides of the Balkan from Constantinople to Antivari, and are bathed by the waters of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean. Thanks to the labors of the sons of St. Francis of Assisi, of St. Vincent de Paul, and of St. Ignatius, and to those of the alumni of the Propaganda and of the incomparable Sisters of Charity, colleges are now springing up, schools for boys and girls, and churches and cathedrals are being built, and bishoprics and archbishoprics established in Roumania and Bosnia, in Bulgaria and Albania, in Herzegovinia, Macedonia, and Greece, and along the shores of the Bosphorus; and those peoples, as if waking from a long sleep, are beginning to remember that they received the faith from Cyril and Methodius and that they were once living branches of the great Catholic tree and obedient sons of the successor to St. Peter.

Who does not remember with profound sorrow the Churches, once so illustrious, of ancient Asia

Minor and Armenia, of Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia? The glorious sees of St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Gregory of Nyssa, of Polycarp and St. Epiphemius, of St. Cyril, St. Ehprem, and of so many other lights of the Church, seemed irrevocably lost, buried forever beneath the accumulated material and moral ruins caused by Turk and Tartar, by the Greek and Armenian schism, and by the many and sad vicissitudes of time. To-day first of all the sons of St. Francis Assisi, next those of St. Vincent de Paul, then those of St. Dominic and St. Ignatius, the Carmelites, the Brothers of Blessed John de la Salle, the White Brothers, and many more, and again the army of Sisters, whose names it would take too long to enumerate, are spreading everywhere over those extensive and desolate provinces, founding schools, opening colleges, seminaries, hospitals, and orphanages, all of which are like small villages, where the faith of Catholics is preserved, and centers whence it radiates into the surrounding country. Ancient Beirut was amazed to see arising on a hill that towers above it a great university, the equal of any in Europe, under the care of the sons of St. Ignatius, which is frequented by about five hundred students of various nationalities and of every religion. On Libanus and at Aleppo, at Damascus, Haifa, and Jaffa, at Nazareth and Tiberias, Jeru-

salem and Bethlehem, may be found hospices, asylums, schools, churches, missions, which the Catholic Church has built and which are sustained and enlarged by Catholic charity.

Still farther to the east and south, between the Indus and Ganges, between the Himalayas and the sea, lies India, that immense peninsula, the richest plateau in the world. There proudly floats the flag of England and we cheerfully do homage to her fairness and justice, for, what is rare among nations, she allows the Catholic Church that freedom of action which elsewhere, even among Christian and Catholic nations, she asks in vain or obtains only with difficulty and in scant measure. That great nation is also generous in protecting and aiding our Sisters, missionaries, and bishops, even permitting her soldiers to help them build their churches, as I learned from a bishop who had passed twenty years in upper India.

Our Lombard missionaries of the House of St. Calocero in Milan are toiling in Hyderabad, in central Bengal, in Hongkong, in northern and southern Ho-Han, on as far as the unexplored countries of Saluen and the Carian Mountains.

In all the great centers of China, the greatest empire of the world, whose inhabitants number three hundred and fifty millions, the cross is conspicuous and Christian communities are scattered

everywhere over plain and mountain, even in regions where the climate is deadly to Europeans. Our missionaries, fearless as martyrs, and our Sisters, real heroines of charity, go everywhere up and down that vast empire, leaving wherever they pass the light of Gospel truth and the fragrance of their Christian charity. How many orphans do they gather about them; how many babes, flung out into the streets by their inhuman parents, do these Sisters and missionaries save from certain death!

The precious seed of Gospel truth is being sown even in Tibet, which until a few years ago seemed closed to foreigners, on the boundless steppes and landes of Manchuria and Tartary, as far as the shores of the Frozen Sea; only three years ago I was speaking to a bishop, a son of St. Francis, who had spent five-and-twenty years in those desolate regions and ardently desired to go back.

In Laos, in Siam, in Cambodia, in Cochin China and Korea, countries more or less tributary to the Celestial empire, year by year converts are being made to the Christian faith.

The apostolic men, who were evangelizing Tonkin, looked with gratification upon the abundant harvests that were being gathered there and related marvelous things concerning the faith and piety of the neophytes, but alas! only a few years

ago a ferocious storm of persecution suddenly broke out that rooted up the growing seed of Christianity, and hundreds of neophytes, emulating the martyrs of the early ages, besides many missionaries and catechists, sealed their faith with their blood. But the standard of France was raised in those parts and the ruins were soon obliterated, faith sprung up anew, and at this hour crowds of young missionaries are filling the gaps made by exile and the sword, and the future of that Church is assured.

Distant Japan, the land bathed with the blood of so many martyrs, that land which St. Francis Xavier had consecrated to God and which for two centuries had stubbornly closed its doors to Europe and the Gospel, more than five-and-twenty years ago opened them and is now going forward along the paths that lead to freedom and opening the way to truth.

Our bishops and missionaries are opening schools there and building churches, and only a few years back the first stone of the foundation of a magnificent cathedral was laid in the presence and amid the plaudits of the civil authorities. That generous people, possibly the most intelligent and candid of all eastern Asia, will yet be a great consolation to the Catholic Church.

Australia, the fifth continent, wholly unknown to the ancients, almost lost in the midst of the

greatest of oceans, and surrounded by a thousand islands, is welcoming with respect and love the preachers of the Gospel, and moving so rapidly along the road to faith that it compares favorably with other lands that received the glad tidings before it. In the grateful and beneficent shadow of the liberty granted by the English flag, populous cities are springing up as if by enchantment, churches are being built, schools opened, dioceses established and synods held, as in the most prosperous days of the Church, and in its capital there is an archbishop, adorned with the sacred purple. A colony of Benedictines, faithful to the example and traditions of their Fathers, are cutting down the forests, breaking up lands never touched by the hand of man, draining pestilential marshes, transforming them into green pastures and smiling fields, rich with harvests, building up villages and founding a New Noricum, whose glories will rival those of the old. Only a short time ago Salvado conducted to the palace of the English Governor some hundreds of boys and girls whom he had, after thirty years of apostolic labor, reclaimed from savagery and civilized, and gave a public exhibition of their proficiency in the European languages, in music and singing, in drawing and in various crafts. And to think that they had been not only savages, but cannibals!

Are not these miracles of the Catholic apostolate? What other religion by the word of God alone works such a rapid and profound transformation in the children of the forests?

There was another continent, many times larger than Europe, on which it seemed that the malediction of heaven rested; which, when the Mussulman had broken the cross and extinguished the light of the Gospel and civilization along all its northern coast, appeared to have become inaccessible to the apostles of Christ. In going to and from the East and the two Americas they passed within sight of those shores, but, I know not why, without ever venturing to set foot on that frightful country. Above the heavens are aflame; beneath the soil is, or was thought to be, arid, desolate, burned up by the sun, a nest of serpents and a lair of wild beasts; that continent, so near us, frightened those who thought of crossing its mysterious confines.

But the charity of Christ is ever living and mighty in the Church, the mother of martyrs and apostles, and what can it not accomplish? This continent of Africa, unexplored and believed to be inexplorable, that mysterious country which had remained so long almost closed both to the east and to the west, and in which there are above 100,000,000 unfortunate souls, steeped in every moral and religious degradation, in this cen-

tury, and notably within the last few years, has been assaulted on every side and invaded and partially subdued by the preachers of the Gospel. Missionaries from Verona, all the alumni of the lamented Comboni,[1] that ardent and intrepid soul, and followed always by the magnanimous Sisters, have traversed the land of the Pharaohs, ascended the Nile, and set up their tents at Khartum, at Berber, and at the gates of Kardofan, as far as the line of the equator. And if unexpected events, such as the explosion of Mussulman fanaticism and the ferocity of the Mahdi and his successor, forced them to withdraw as far as Assuan and Cairo, leaving behind them some Brothers and Sisters captives and slaves in the hands of the enemy, we have no doubt that they will soon again retake the land from which they were driven out. The Catholic missionary may at times withdraw, but it is only to take up again his work with renewed courage and fresh determination. His watchword is ever that of Christ: "*Go* forward! Forward! Teach all nations. If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." The hour appointed by God will sound again a second time, and so many sacrifices and labors, so many lives offered up in the cause of faith and civilization,

[1] One should have known Monsignor Comboni, Bishop of the Sudan, to get an idea of what a true Catholic apostle is. The courage, activity, and energy of this man were marvelous; it

will in the end bloom afresh and bear the hoped-for fruit.

In the meantime what are our missionaries and devoted Sisters doing at Cairo? I saw them there; they have established an agricultural colony on Gesira, an island formed by the Nile, where a hundred boys and girls rescued from slavery are taught and cultivate the land. The sight of this colony is a spectacle to move one to tears.

Monsignor Giustino de Jacobis, an Italian, in the early half of this century penetrated into Abyssinia, and the inhabitants to this day call him a saint; and afterward into the same country went the heroic Massaia, who lived there for five-and-thirty years, discharging the duties at once of an apostle and a physician. And to-day his brother Capuchins are established in our colony of Eritrea on the northern boundary of Abyssinia, and their influence is felt thoughout all that vast region.

In these latter years the *White Brothers* of Cardinal Lavigerie, some setting out from the Sahara and some from the eastern coasts, ad-

was only necessary to listen to him as he narrated his journeys, the dangers encountered and overcome. There were thirty-eight missionaries in the Upper Nile country; all were stricken down with the terrible fever, and only five survived, among them the vigorous Comboni. But the next year he succumbed in the prime of life and strength after seeing a young missionary devoured by a crocodile.

vanced toward central Africa, and, after incredible suffering, after having paid a heavy toll to the deadly climate, and after they had for the first time stained with their blood the javelins of those savages, established themselves on the great lakes of Tanganyika, and of the Victoria, Albert, and Albert Edward Nyanza; and they have now many small centers of Christian Missions, whence the light of truth is diffused throughout the heart of Africa.

Still farther down in the southern hemisphere the sons of St. Ignatius, who are real masters and models in the labors of the apostolate, defying alike the deadly fevers and the ferocity of the inhabitants, went up the Zambezi and established settlements on its banks, scattering everywhere the seed of the Gospel. Cape Colony and Natal, and other small states and republics, territories tributary to Great Britain, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, Zululand, Basutoland, and the Portuguese and German colonies all opened their gates to the Catholic missionaries and some vicariates apostolic and bishoprics are established there, and a colony of Trappists teach those nomads to cultivate the earth and are preparing them to enter into the great family of civilized Christians.

Christian faith and the civilization that is its fruit are ordinarily propagated and spread along

the routes that nature and man open up and prepare. Hence it is that the preachers of the Gospel, like great navigators and travelers, begin their labors among the people dwelling along the shores of the ocean and the banks of rivers, and little by little push forward into less accessible regions. We Catholics shall ever hold navigators and explorers among the greatest and most illustrious benefactors of the human race; they open up the avenues through which the word of the Gospel may be carried, they break down the barriers that shut peoples out from our missionaries and prevent them from hearing the words of truth and ranging themselves under the standard of the Cross. Yes, all honor and glory and everlasting gratitude to those fearless explorers of oceans, islands, and continents! Without them how many peoples would still grope in the darkness of error!

There are already many missions on the west coast of Africa in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia; and they are numerous along the Senegal and the Niger as far as Timbuktu and Abeokuta in the kingdom of Dahomey, famous for its human sacrifices. Scarcely had Stanley, some years ago, completed the journey commenced by Cameron, Livingstone, and others, and explored the Kongo, one of the largest rivers of the world, traversing nearly the whole of the equatorial African con-

tinent, when our missionaries hastened thither from all points, ascended the river as far as the cataracts and planted establishments there which, it is confidently hoped, will be efficient agencies in converting those numerous and savage tribes. Other missionaries followed the Italian Breisa in his long and daring journeys and preached the Gospel to those tribes dwelling along the Ogove and the Kongo, and still others established themselves in Cimbebasia on the banks of the Cunene.

That tireless man, Cardinal Lavigerie, transferred his residence from Algiers to Tunis, where he made every effort to establish the see of St. Cyprian, and, powerfully supported by France, founded seminaries and colleges, hospitals and parishes in ancient Carthage, sent missionaries into the interior and gave a strong impulse to Catholic enterprises from Tripoli to Algiers, into all of which he infused fresh life.

The two large islands lying off the east coast of Africa, Madagascar and Zanzibar, have had for some years the privilege of hearing the Gospel and not long since the latter of these gladly received a vicar sent thither by the Holy Father.

And now let us cross the Atlantic and go hastily through the New World, which is seven times as large as Europe and seems to be destined by Providence to accomplish great things. It is strange and something absolutely solitary in the history

of the Church that in all those marvelous regions the Faith encountered no obstacles, or very trifling ones. Systematic persecutions, arising out of religious intolerance, and hurrying victims on to prison and the gallows are unknown in the two Americas, both of which love and respect liberty. Within these latter years the Holy See has intrusted the missions of Patagonia to the venerated Dom Bosco, whose children have already reaped an abundant harvest there and possess in the two Americas above a hundred houses, all built by the contributions of the faithful.

The Franciscan missions, so popular throughout all South America, as we learn from the annals of the Order, are spread everywhere, up to the very base of the Cordilleras and upon the banks of the rivers that flow through those countries, so imperfectly known; and these Fathers, working silently, have been most successful in reclaiming, civilizing, and baptizing those savages. Any one who has read or reads the "Franciscan Annals" can not but admire the holy labors of these humble and splendid Religious, who scattered throughout Brazil and the Argentine Republic, through Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico penetrate into limitless forests, go among the poor savages dwelling there, and, unknown to all the world, consume their lives in the midst of nameless privations.

It is hardly necessary to speak of the condition of the Catholic Church in the North American republic of the United States, which, it may be, is destined at no distant day to give the law, not only to all the New World, but also to the Old, and to guide its fortunes and flood it with its products. When toward the close of the eighteenth century the rising confederation proclaimed its independence, it contained only three millions of people; there were then very few Catholic priests, and not a single bishop or prefect apostolic. To-day that republic has over seventy millions of people, many thousands of priests, above ninety bishops and archbishops, hundreds of religious institutions of men and women, and one Catholic university.

What a transformation! Faithful to the very wise maxim of Washington, "Always respect religion," that great country has reached a degree of power, of industrial and commercial prosperity, of security both at home and abroad, that seems like a dream to us of old Europe, who are ever agitated and threatened by social uprisings and ground down by taxes to support giant armaments on land and sea.

Some years back the Holy Father gathered about him the leading bishops of the Republic to advise with them as to the ways and means of making religion more effective for good in that

wealthy country, and the councils held there subsequently and the sending thither permanently of a delegate of the Holy See, co-operated to carry these counsels into effect.

Who could have ever imagined that the President of that great republic would have presided at a literary and scientific exhibition given at the college of the Jesuits in Philadelphia and distributed the awards to the alumni? No one there seemed surprised at it; it was conduct becoming a President and worthy a country enjoying such liberty. What a lesson for us!

We shall say nothing of Canada and of all those countries that extend from the United States to the Arctic Ocean, in which Catholic missionaries have sown the good seed and are reaping an abundant harvest.

My friends, we have in a very few minutes gone the round of the world, and in a few rapid strokes I have set before you the condition of the Catholic Church and of her missions in every quarter of the known globe, and you have learned that there is not an empire, a kingdom, or a republic, not an island or tribe, no matter how isolated and shut out from intercourse with the rest of the world, into which she has not sent at least a small band of her priests and religious to announce the glad tidings of the Gospel. Neither the harshness of the climate, nor the fury of the elements, nor

measureless distances, nor the perils of the sea, nor the ferocity of the people, nor the persecutions of governments, nor obstacles of any kind, were able, or are now able, to interrupt their labors, to cool their zeal, to enfeeble their courage, or to shake their constancy.

The Church goes ever forward and trusting in God heeds not her enemies, nor does she fear their strength or their artifices. She is the Daughter of the Martyr of Calvary and she glories in treading in His footsteps. Go through the annals of all the religions of the world, ancient and modern, and if you find a single one of them, none excepted, that has displayed such power of expansion and has called into being an apostolate as vast, as perennial, as generous, and as disinterested as that of the Catholic Church, then I shall lay down my arms and confess I am beaten. When, my friends, have we ever seen the Brahmins of India, the disciples of Confucius, the Ulema of the Koran, the followers of Buddha or Zoroaster, the popes of Russia or the rabbis of Judaism organizing pacific expeditions to convert to their religion distant, barbarous, and savage peoples? True, the Protestants try in some sort to copy the Catholic apostolate; but this is an art which they have learned from us; we have had an apostolate for nineteen centuries, they for scarcely three; theirs cost them more in money than in

men, ours more in men than in money; they have some hundreds of missionaries all well paid; we many, very many thousands, who live a life of sacrifice and go about begging their daily bread; their efforts are sterile, or nearly so, ours are most prolific; their missionaries rarely go out of sight of the flag that protects them, ours have no standard but that of the Cross, and they are most numerous where the danger is greatest; I do not know that they have any martyrs at all, or how many; we count ours by the hundreds and thousands; their missionaries are respectable men who never want for anything that makes life pleasant, ours are faithful imitators of the apostles and, going forth with a crucifix on their breast and a breviary and a catechism in their hand, are ready for the most painful sacrifices and spurn as a temptation the very thought of earthly compensation.

What a sublime figure is the Supreme Head of the Church to whom, rigorously speaking, alone belongs the glorious title of apostle, for he is the source and root of the apostolate. Contemplate him; he, an unarmed man, weak, bowed down with years, care, and sorrows, made a target for contradictions, living off the contributions of the faithful, sends yearly, monthly, almost daily, legions of apostolic men and bands not less numerous of heroic women in the name of God into the

four quarters of the globe, finds means to feed and clothe them, and provides for the enormous expenses of their long journeys, for the building of churches and schools, and for everything required to found and establish missions. From these men and women he obtains day by day an interminable series of sacrifices which would frighten the most courageous of men, and these are joyfully, gladly made; he obtains them all by a single word, by the sole expression of his will, by only pointing to the Crucified and to heaven. This spectacle of courage, of incomparable strength, of faith, hope, and charity, of unexampled sacrifices, for so many centuries, and all over the earth is, I repeat, something that fills us with amazement, makes our hearts beat for very joy and with honest pride, and forces us to cry out: O Church of God, thou art truly the spouse, the heir of Jesus Christ, because in thee His Spirit lives and thou alone dost faithfully fulfil the great commandment: "Go, teach all nations. Preach to all men." In thee alone do I see luminous the apostolate, which shall not cease until time is no more.

And whence does the Church draw these volunteer soldiers of the army that she keeps in every country under heaven? Whence come and where are formed these thousands of missionaries and Sisters, who ceaselessly increase in number, who

fill the gaps of the fallen, who are ever reaching out into new fields and ever multiplying their stations? The Church draws her soldiers mainly from the various families of Religious Orders, the nurseries of apostles. The Benedictines, the Capuchins, the Reformed, the Observants, the Dominicans, the Lazarists, the Jesuits, the Augustinians, the Carmelites, and I mention only the principal ones, furnish the greater number of the apostolic men who preach the Gospel in the Old World and the New. And how could it be otherwise, since the conversion of the world is pre-eminently the work of the apostolate of Christ and of the Church, and therefore this work belongs in a special way to those men in whom, by reason of their vocation, the spirit of Christ is manifested in all its strength. These Religious are men free from the entanglements of a family and from material interests; they are not tied to this place or that, they are ever ready to obey, and by a long novitiate of self-denial they are prepared for the trials and the privations of an apostolic life. Take away the Religious Orders and four-fifths of the foreign missions would disappear. They are the flying corps of the army of Christ, who go from end to end of the earth at the mere beck of their superior.

And then consider the Providence of God, my friends. The storm of revolution in various

forms that has broken over Europe in the course of the nineteenth century dispersed the Religious of nearly all the Houses of Spain and France, Italy and Germany. Countless Houses of Religious have been closed and their peaceful dwellers forced to go forth homeless. But by the Providence of God the number of missionaries has gone on increasing prodigiously outside of Europe and the conquests of the Faith have been tripled. Never has there been an age in which apostolic men, who preach Jesus Christ everywhere, have been as numerous as in ours; banished from the cloisters they go forth in troops as missionaries. The persecutions and suppressions of Religious Orders are like impetuous storms, which, while they purify the air and uproot trees a hundred years old, wrench off the seed and carry them on their wings to the tops of mountains and into the heart of deserts, or drop them in a fissure of a decaying wall, and in a little while the passer-by is amazed on looking up to see the seed growing and blooming there, not knowing by what mysterious hand it was deposited. Everything fits in with the designs of God who disposes all things, even persecutions, so that they will contribute to the good of the Church and the spread of His kingdom.

These soldiers of the army of the Church are also drawn from those numerous colleges and

seminaries, which with infinite pains and sacrifice she has erected both in Europe and outside it. Among these the first place should be given to the College of the Propaganda, founded by Gregory XV, enlarged and splendidly endowed by Urban VIII and his successors and by all the members of the Sacred College. I believe that a more exalted idea, or a more cosmopolitan one than that which inspired the College of the Propaganda was never conceived by any monarch or by any religion. In that college and in that alone of all the colleges in the world the words of Christ, "Teach all nations," are absolutely verified and there the practical Catholicity of the Church finds its fullest expression. In that college are gathered together youths, aspiring to the priesthood and to the apostolate, from all the nations of the earth; there are to be found Chinese, Americans, and Soudanese, Persians, Albanians, and Maronites, Bulgarians and natives of Burma; in a word you can find there the world in miniature, an epitome of ethnography, and, as at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, almost every language of the world may be heard spoken within its walls.[1]

After the great College of the Propaganda,

[1] On the feast of the Epiphany, 1857, the special feast of the Propaganda, I was present at an *Academia* of the young men studying there and I remember that compositions were recited in forty-two languages.

which is almost a museum of archæology, of history ancient and modern, of geography and the natural sciences, come those of lesser note, the North American and the South American, the English, Irish, and Scotch, the Greek and the Armenian, the German-Hungary, those of Sts. Peter and Paul, and others opened in these latter years.

To these colleges, all in Rome, must be added those outside Rome and more or less dependent on the Propaganda, namely: The English College at Lisbon and Valladolid, the Irish College at Paris, the American College at Louvain, the Chinese at Naples, the Illyrian at Loretto, now owing to stress of circumstances greatly reduced. Let us not omit the College of Scutari for the Albanians, that of St. Calocero at Milan, the Brignole Sale at Genoa, that of Verona for the Sudan, and above all that at Paris, where more than two hundred young men eager for the foreign missions are being prepared and which glories in a number of martyrs. Let us also remember the Colleges at Lyons, Puy, Picpus, that of St. Francis Xavier in Belgium, of Stail in Holland, of All Saints in Ireland, chiefly intended to supply the missions of Australia, Canada, and the Cape of Good Hope. Then there is the College of Mill Hill for the Missions in India, that of Poulo-Pinang, which educates missionaries

for China at Singapore, and the very large Convent of St. Anthony, lately built near St. John Lateran, also to supply the foreign missions. In order to be brief I omit others. These, my friends, after the Religious Orders, the nurseries of the apostolate, are the springs whence gush forth the waters that irrigate and make fertile lands made desolate by heresy and schism, by Mohammedanism, Paganism, and savagery.

Having laid before you as best I could the stupendous creations of the Church for continuing and augmenting the apostolate instituted by Christ, amazed as I am at the picture myself, allow me to ask you: Does the history of all religions show us anything, I will not say equal, but similar to it? No, my friends. Does the Church that calls into being and sustains so many and such marvelous institutions, and that makes such a display of her strength in thus developing her resources, seem to you to be growing old and dying, as some, who are either short-sighted or blind, go on repeating? She is as full of youth and life as when she came forth from the Cenacle. She is like the sun which, though pouring forth light and heat in torrents, is ever the same, never diminishes, and is never impoverished. And she is so because her light and heat come from Him who said: "I am the light of the world. I am truth and life."

We acknowledge Thee, O Church of God, as the mother of saints and apostles, that dost send them forth to the four quarters of the globe. We are and shall ever be thy docile and loving children. Go forward with the work thy divine Spouse has committed to thee; teach men, sanctify all peoples until in thee and through thee is verified the prophecy and the ardent desire of Him who once said: "And there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

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